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Carmina Burana: An Annotated English Translation of No. CCII of Codex Lat. 4460 of the Staatsbibliothek of Munich: Ludus Scenicus De Nativitate Domini

Alphonsus L. Pakenham
Loyola University Chicago

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C A R M I N A B U R A N A

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An Annotated English Translation of No. CCII of Codex Lat.
4460 of the Staatsbibliothek of Munich

Ludus scenicus de nativitate Domini

BY

ALPHONSUS L. PAKENHAM, F.S.C.H.

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF ARTS IN LOYOLA UNIVERSITY

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VITA

Alphonsus L. Pakenham was born in Dublin, Ireland, September 9, 1890.

He entered the Normal and Training School, St. Mary's, Marino, Dublin in 1906 and graduating from there he entered the Congregation of the Christian Brothers of Ireland (Fratres Scholarum Christianarum de Hibernia). On completing three years teaching at Our Lady's Mount, Cork, Ireland, he received his teacher's certificate from the Intermediate Board of Education for Ireland.

Transferred to Gibraltar in 1910 the writer spent seventeen years on 'The Rock' where he taught Latin and Modern Languages at Line Wall College. He was transferred to the United States in 1927 and taught at All Hallows High School, New York, for three years till he was transferred to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he taught at St. Mary's College. In 1934 he was appointed Headmaster at Iona Preparatory School, New Rochelle, New York, and in 1940 was transferred to Chicago, Illinois, where he taught at Leo High School till 1944 when he was appointed Vice-President of Iona College, New Rochelle.

The degree of Master of Arts was conferred on the writer in 1929 and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1934, both in the field of Romance Languages, by Fordham University.

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PREFACE

In the course of reading in medieval Latin we come across a large corpus of interesting writings ascribed to the goliards. While the goliardic hymns are the natural expression of student life, the life of the Wandering Scholars, there are also found among the works ascribed to the goliards a great many mystery and miracle plays that have a more spiritual note to them than do many of the songs of the "gyrovagi".

Most of the mystery plays are dogmatic in content though folk-songs are not left out entirely. To make one of these plays known to English readers in its entirety and in its original setting is the purpose of this Thesis.

We shall start immediately with a condensed historical background of the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini.

CHAPTER I

BAVARIA

It was the age of confiscations. When the peace-loving monks solemnly pacing their silent cloisters in Germany heard, in 1780, of the death in Vienna of the Empress Maria Theresa, the last and beyond doubt, the greatest of the Hapsburgs, they may have whispered to themselves, hopefully or apprehensively, what their Emperor, Frederick the Great, said to the courtier who had brought him the news: "Maria Theresa is dead: there will be now a new order of things."

A new order was to come to many places, but the plundering of the German monasteries was to continue. The restraining hand of the deeply religious Empress no longer rested on the arm of Frederick. He had felt its pressure when his plan for the general secularization of monastic and other ecclesiastical property for the profit of the various Catholic Governments failed -- a project to which he had already won over the support of Britain and France. It failed because of the opposition of the Empress, joined with the opposition of the Pope, Benedict XIV, and that of the Prince Bishop of Mainz.

Plundering of the monasteries was at the time nothing new in Germany. The confiscation of religious property

following upon the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 had caused the Church the loss of more than a hundred monasteries and innumerable pious foundations.

In England, of course, the destruction of the monasteries had been completed in the sixteenth century under Henry VIII, a destruction "which must be regarded as one of the great events of the century" according to Abbot Gasquet.¹ The English monasteries of that day were looked upon as one of the great bulwarks of the papal system; the monks "the great standing army of Rome." But the document granted in 1535 to the king's lay vicar-general in spiritual affairs, and the Act of Parliament in 1536 for the dissolution of the monasteries let loose "Cromwell's curse" over the dissolute King's fair island possessions and embittered men's hearts until today.

Within the space of three short years Henry's triumph over the monastic orders was completed by the brutal murders of the Abbot of Glastonbury, the Abbot of Colchester and the Abbot of Reading, and so before the winter of 1540 had set in the last of the abbeys had been added to the ruins with which the land was strewn from one end to the other, and over five thousand monks and two thousand nuns had been scattered in England alone.

France had never experienced any similar confiscation or suppression of its monastic institutions. The Convention of

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¹Francis Aidan Gasquet, O.S.B. Catholic Encyclopedia, 10, 445.

1792-1795 which had proclaimed the Republic and which had caused Louis XVI to be executed had proposed a suppression of the appropriation for religious worship. The Commune of Paris on November 24, 1793 demanded the closing of all churches, but even in the very bitterest days of the Terror there was never a moment when Catholic religious worship was suspended throughout France. The Concordat of Napoleon Bonaparte, who became Consul in 1799, assured to French Catholicism a hundred years of peace, though the Church lived under the feeling of a perpetual threat.

But it is throughout Germany that the world was to see confiscation carried out in its greatest thoroughness. The Elector Maximilian III began in Bavaria, during his reign from 1745 to 1777, a work of destruction which was carried on by his successors down to the Elector Maximilian Joseph IV, who became King Maximilian I of Bavaria in 1805. This ruler had been twice married to Protestants. During his reign the government proceeded with great severity against all forms of Catholic religious life. The number of churches which were dismantled or profaned is hardly credible: treasures of religious art of earlier days were sold for a mere trifle or shamefully treated: whole wagonloads of books and documents were burned or thrown into the river.

The convents of the Mendicant orders, Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, Carmelites were the first to fall. A decree of September 9, 1800 deprived the religious orders in

4
Bavaria of all property rights. The suppression of the Jesuits had been decreed by Clement XIV in 1773. Then came, in Bavaria, the suppression of the Canons Regular and the Benedictines. The cathedral monasteries were not spared. Among the abbeys that disappeared in 1803 were those of St. Blasien of the Black Forest, St. Emmeran of Ratisbon, Andechs, St. Ulrich of Augsburg, Michelsberg, Benedictbeuren, Ertal, Kempten, Metten, Oberaltaich, Ottobeuren, Scheyern, Tegernsee and Wessobrunn.

The monasteries in other parts of Germany met with the common fate of all church property. Besides her twenty-five ecclesiastical principalities and her eighteen universities, Germany lost all her religious houses for men: their property being given to Bavaria, Prussia and Austria.

Among these suppressed monasteries was the ancient Abbey of Maria-Laach near Andernach in the Rhineland, which dated back to 1093. In the great secularizing movement of 1802 the church and monastery went first to the French government, then in 1815 to the Prussian government. In 1863 the property was acquired by the Jesuits who quickly made it into a great centre of learning. It remained in their possession till the Kulturkampf in 1873 banished the restored Order of St. Ignatius. The Benedictines of the Beuron Congregation moved into the monastery in 1892. In the following year Maria-Laach was canonically raised again to the dignity of an Abbey.

In the Netherlands and the Principality of Liège the

religious houses disappeared immediately. In the territories immediately subject to the House of Hapsburg the secularization of monastic houses had begun thirty years before. The dioceses of the Low Countries, then subject to the House of Hapsburg, lost one hundred and sixty-eight convents, abbeys or priories. In all 738 religious houses were suppressed in the Empire during the reign of the liberal-minded autocrat, Joseph II, the unworthy son of Maria Theresa. The Government transformed the monasteries into hospitals, colleges or barracks. All those in Carinthia and the Tyrol were sacrificed. The religious in Bohemia had not yet recovered from the ravages caused by the wars of Frederick II and Maria Theresa when they had to encounter this new disruption. In Hungary the Benedictines were completely wiped out. Under the more benevolent rule of Francis II, however, the Hungarian Abbey of St. Martin was restored to the community and the monks in isolated instances were allowed to return to those monasteries which had escaped complete destruction. The celebrated Abbey of Reichenau did not arise from its ruins. The princely Abbey of St. Gall had been dissolved and the proposal to re-establish it deprived of its land, made by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, was rejected by the abbot. On the conclusion of the Congress, 1824 houses for men and 612 for women were re-established.

The Swiss monasteries had been pillaged and ruined by the wars of the Revolution but the Act of Mediation in 1803 gave

some respite. Again during the long period of persecution and confiscation in Switzerland, from 1838 to 1848, the monks sought refuge, some in Germany, some in France, and some in Austria. The Swiss Benedictines sought shelter in the United States where they founded the Swiss-American congregation.

One of the indirect results of the suppression of the religious orders and the confiscation of their property, as carried out under the direction of Maximilian I of Bavaria in 1803, was the throwing open to the world at large this window into a past world, the making known this collection of poems, the vivacious inventions of some of the wandering scholars of earlier days, which today we call the Carmina Burana.

CHAPTER II

BENEDICTBEUREN

Among the Abbeys suppressed by the decree of 1803 was that of Benedictbeuren in the Bavarian Alps about thirty miles south of Munich. Tradition, as well as manuscripts dating as far back as the tenth century, give the year 740 as that of its foundation. Its founding is ascribed to three brothers of noble birth who came under the influence of St. Boniface who was then preaching the faith in Bavaria. The three founders, each in turn, ruled the monastery which in the middle of the tenth century was destroyed by the Huns. It was restored in 969 and continued as a college of regular clergy, or canons, till 1031. Through the influence of the Emperor, Henry III, the Benedictine rule was revived that year by the introduction of Abbot Ellinger and eleven monks from the neighboring monastery of Tegernsee, a monastery which also under Maximilian was to feel the weight of the despoiler's hand.

Gothelm, the next Abbot, established the famous monastic school in Benedicteuren and the Abbey soon became a great place of pilgrimage and the scene of many miracles by reason of the relics of St. Anastasia, brought thither in 1053. Throughout the Middle Ages it continued to flourish as a seat of learning

and of piety, Popes and Emperors honouring it with their gifts and by their visits. Rudolph of Hapsburg made two of its Abbots, Ortholph II in 1284 and Henry III in 1289, Princes of the Empire. Among the many later disasters suffered by the Abbey, four serious fires are mentioned. A plague in 1611 carried off many of its monks and it also suffered heavily during the Swedish invasion and in the Thirty Years' War in the seventeenth century. In 1803, when the Abbey was finally suppressed by the Government, the monks, thirty-four in number, were dispersed. The conventual buildings became successively a barracks, a military hospital and a stud-house. In 1901 Freiherr von Kramer-Klett, who had restored several Bavarian monasteries, offered the Government five and a half million marks for the property. The Government demanded twelve million marks, a demand which von Kramer-Klett rejected.

The library and archives of the Abbey of Benedictbeuren had contained many priceless manuscripts and charters. In a catalogue of the library published in 1250 there were listed more than one hundred books and manuscripts. At the suppression in 1803 the library comprised more than forty thousand volumes. A number of these were that year incorporated in the Court Library while the remainder were left to be disposed of by the subsequent occupants of the Abbey.

As part of what Helen Waddell calls the "flotsam after the storm of dissolution of the monasteries" there came to the

Hof-Bibliothek at Munich the sheaf of manuscripts, a most fascinating collection of satires and student songs, which the world knows today as the Carmina Burana, the Songs of Benedictbeuren, for that is the title now given to that varied collection of poems, joyous and sober, pious and licentious, preserved to us in this manuscript of the late thirteenth century. This particular manuscript had never been included in any catalog of the monastery of Benedictbeuren, where it seems to have lived "a kind of stowaway existence, hidden to save it from the censor's gall."¹ It is listed today in the Latin Codex 4460 of the Munich library. Schmeller, the Librarian at Munich first gave it to the world by his edition published in 1847, forty-four² years after the plundering of the monastery. His edition, that offers us a glimpse into a lost world, the world of the wandering singers, had to serve the purposes of scholars till a critical edition supplied with commentary and notes could be published by Alfons Hilka and Otto Schumann in 1930.³

This collection of songs may have been the repertory of some passing goliard. It was not a commonplace book, growing by chance jottings, but a copy made by half a dozen hands and at

¹Helen Waddell. Medieval Latin Lyrics. London, Constable and Co. Ltd., 1929, 341.

²Bibliothek des Litterarischer Vereins in Stuttgart. Stuttgart, Litterarischer Verein, 1847, ed. Johann Andreas Schmeller, 16.

³Alfons Hilka und Otto Schumann. Carmina Burana, Heidelberg, 1930.

the one time, possibly from some borrowed original. Karl Young holds it more probably "the valued possession of a monastic community which desired to have its own anthology of the vivacious literary inventions of the "vagantes".⁴ Raby's opinion is that the several pieces are the work of many poets and that they are from more than one country. "There are French and German poems,"⁵ he says, "and we may guess English poems."

Critics differ as to the date of the collection's composition. Helen Waddell simply states "the handwriting is of the twelfth century."⁶ Meyer assigns the writing to a period about the year 1225.⁷ Schumann infers that the selections were produced towards the end of the thirteenth century and that their original home may have been the Bavarian monastery. He holds that up to now we can have no positive proof as to their provenance.

They all belong to one common impulse of song, which came from France, spread thence to England, to Germany and, in a

⁴Karl Young. The Drama of the Medieval Church. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1932, 1, 432.

⁵Frederick J. E. Raby. A History of secular Latin poetry in the Middle Ages. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

⁶Helen Waddell. op. cit., 341.

⁷Wilhelm Meyer. Fragmenta Burana (a facsimile reproduction of 7 leaves originally belonging to cod. lat. 4660 in the Bayerische staatsbibliothek at Munich). Weidmann, Berlin, 1901, 17 and 32.

smaller degree to Italy, but the shaping spirit is German. They are by no means the work of precocious beginners. The Latin lyrics of the Carmina Burana belong to the scholars' commonwealth of Paris and Orleans, Oxford and Bologna, Salerno and Pavia. They are a strong witness to the depth and the reality of accomplishment of these poets, who were often no less serious craftsmen than the makers of hymns and sequences. The moral and satirical poems, apart from one or two famous pieces, are not of the first order. Still they are worthy of careful study.

CHAPTER III
CARMINA BURANA

An over-all study of this "profane service-book" of the "gyrovagi", the Wandering Scholars, is interesting. Forty-three of the compositions are noted to be sung, the manuscript providing musical notation. About one third of the manuscript is serious, some of it even devout; but it is for the most part satirical, with the piquant satire of the "vagantes," most of them scholars disappointed after hopes for preferment, "spoiled priests" possibly. The satire of these "vagantes," the eternal rancour of those who have not against those who have, Helen Waddell calls "one of the earliest corrosives of the Medieval Church".¹

The contents are roughly grouped. The smaller and graver section has complaints against fortune, and attacks on simony, for the unbeneficed have always been harsh with the beneficed. There are recruiting songs for the Crusades, with a lament for the terrible defeat in Palestine in 1187, and for the defeat of Coeur de Lion in 1199. There are moralizings on the instability of human things. Here the poets make use of ancient themes and

¹Op. cit., 343.

recall to memory the famous men and the great empires of old. For in the age there was a strengthening of the feeling for antiquity, men were "laudatores temporis acti," and had an appreciation of the complexity of human history. The authors were steeped in antiquity, their reminiscences extending from Horace and Juvenal to Boethius, and they took their illustrations from history and from romance. Fragments from the Copa, that collection of light verse which Servius attributed to Virgil in the fourth century and which came down to us through the Middle Ages as Helen Waddell humorously says "bobbing at a painter's end in the mighty wash of the Aeneid,"² jostle with songs from Hugh of Orleans, from the Archpoet, from Walther von der Vogelweide, from Gaultier de Chatillon, possibly even from the great Abelard himself.

The second last line of the Copa, appearing at the end of the sixth stanza of carmen 178a of the Carmina Burena

pone merum et talos, pereat qui crastina curet!

might be taken as the motto for their authors.

Towards the end of the manuscript there are two "ludi," or plays, one for Christmas and one for Easter, a great deal more elaborate than those which the vagabond Hilarius took about with him in the earlier half of the twelfth century.

The other and by far the more famous group is the collection of love-songs, drinking-songs, songs in praise of the

²Op. cit., 281.

"gyrovagi," the vagabond order, a very profane Gamblers' Mass, an elaborate parody, the Officium Lusorum, with epistles, gradual, sequence and gospel, some begging songs, one very clever with a blank left for the name of the person addressed to be filled in:

Decus N

as "who should say, 'O Pride of Coventry' or 'Canterbury, or Cologne, or Salzburg.'³"

The authors of the songs and poems have remained anonymous: they were the wandering clerics, "masterless men," who, just as the language in which they wrote belonged to no one nation or race, so they knew no frontiers but wandered hither and thither as their untiring fancy led them,

Deçà, delà
Pareil à la
Feuille morte;⁴

never at peace and never at rest,

toujours poussés vers de nouveaux rivages,
Dans la nuit éternelle emportés sans retour.⁵

Few of them have anything original to say, but as their poetic fancy led them they moved quite naturally in an artificial world of their own imaginings, remote as far as its expression was concerned from the Christian life around them. Actually, of

³Helen Waddell. op. cit.

⁴Paul Verlaine. Chanson d'Automne.

⁵Lamartine. Le lac.

course, they attended the liturgical services of the church, and delighted, we hope, to sing the Church's song. But they reserved their own freedom of composition for their own song. Here we can see how poetry was beginning to set itself free from its age-long dependence on the Church and to sing other than religious themes. It is an evidence to the growing strength of the secular spirit, a bid for the recognition of the supposed rights of a life here below.

The secular spirit had already made inroads even into the cathedral schools in the eleventh century, where the combination of learning and piety had become the basis of the new humanism of Rheims and Chartres, where Terence, Virgil, Horace, Ovid and Statius stood side by side on the library shelves with Prudentius, Sedulius, Fortunatus, Boethius and Arator. Throughout the twelfth century the secularizing movement gathered strength and the increasing numbers of students pursued studies other than those directed to ecclesiastical ends. The new humanism got out of control, became rank, and flowered with weeds of infinite diversity and frequently of rare beauty while the Church still bloomed with its marvellous spiritual song. Outside the Church, the laymen sang in their native tongues and the scholars quickly joined them. But the ecclesiastical culture still overshadowed their efforts at freedom. The forms were copied from the Church, and the poets still owed some sort of allegiance to her.

The poets of the Carmina Burana are young "with the youth of waving branches and running water." In their song there is

no melancholy

in taberna quando sumus
non curamus quid sit humus.⁶

and if perhaps towards the end some of them come to sing a lofty "nunc dimittis" the compiler of this extensive collection has kept the record only of their youth.

The Carmina Burana are a witness to the depth and the reality of the work of these members of the "ordo vagorum." They are songs of spring-time and youth. "Il s'agit ici tout simplement de formules consacrées par les chansons de mai."⁷ It is a sensuous and care-free song centering round the joy of the moment. This is particularly apparent in the last section of the Carmina -- the Potatoria et Lusoria, -- songs of the tavern and the gambling-den. It is in the tavern they throw the dice for their fortune: they are of the "Secta Decii." See them in their Officium Lusorum, their parody of the Mass of Easter Sunday with its parody of the sequence Victimae Paschali:

Victime novali 'çinke ses' immolent Deciani.
'ses çinke' abstraxit vestes;
equum, cappam et pelles abstraxit confestim a possessore
sors est Sortita, duello conflixere mirando
tandem tres Decii vicerunt illum....⁸

The "ordo vagorum" was an invisible Order, a company of rascals never united, but here presented in the Carmina as the

⁶In Schmeller's edition, 235, 175, fol. 87b.

⁷Gaston Paris in Le Journal des savants. 1891, 685.

⁸In Schmeller's edition, 248, 198, fol. 93, 3.

antitype of the monastic orders within the Church.

The quality of the versification in the Carmina Burana is of that immense variety that belongs to the Middle Ages. For, as Raby says:

Just as new forms of rime and rhythm (other than the classical ones) proved to be by far the most adequate vehicles for the expression of the higher religious emotion of the Middle Ages, so too, the typically human feelings which are common to the popular poetry of all times had to clothe themselves in the same dress.⁹

The classical metres, except in the hands of a very few highly skilled craftsmen, were incapable of becoming a really satisfactory medium of poetical expression. The varying merit of the poems in the Carmina too is a characteristic of medieval Latin literature which, unlike the literature of antiquity, has come down to us a vast bulk in which good and bad are mingled, the tentative along with the complete achievement.

Yet, diversified as are the compositions in their literary merit and their subject matter, the book of the Carmina has a unity of its own "as though drops of quick-silver had come together" and the impression one gets is the oddly familiar impression of the century, the background of their century, Barbarossa and Thomas à Becket, the second Henry and the second Frederick, Paris University and Chartres Cathedral dissolve and pass indistinct "as water is in water."

⁹F. J. E. Raby. A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the beginnings to the close of the Middle Ages. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1927, 290.

The outstanding lyric in the whole collection, the one to which critics seem unanimous in conceding pride of place, is the
 10
Dum Diane vitrea.

Dum Diane vitrea
 sero lampas oritur,
 et a fratris rosea
 luce dum succenditur,
 dulcis aura zephyri
 spirans omnes etheri
 nubes tollit;
 sic emollit
 vi chordarum pectora,
 et immutat
 cor quod nutat
 ad amoris pignora.

The whole poem is full of the anonymous poet's intuitions of beauty.

"Here, indeed, is craft of a superior order," cries
 11 Raby. Helen Waddell calls it "the height of secular Latin poetry, even as the Dies irae is the height of sacred; the
 12 twin peaks of Parnassus."

The best known number in the collection today is the Students' song Obmittamus studia:

Obmittamus studia
 dulce est desipere
 et carpamus dulcia
 iuventutis tenere;
 res est apta senectuti
 seriis intendere

 10 In Schmeller's edition, 124, 37, fol. 23.

11 F. J. E. Raby. A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1934, 2, 271.

12 Op. cit., 149.

Refl.

Velox etas preterit
studio detenta
lascivire suggerit
tenera iuventa¹³

Helen Waddell has a delightful translation of this:

Let's away with study
Folly's sweet
Treasure all the pleasure
Of our youth.¹⁴

A piece of rare versification is:

Ecce, sonat in aperto
vox clamantis in deserto!
In desertum nos deserti
iam de morte sumus certi
.....
Quis est verax, quis est bonus
vel quis Dei portat onus?
Ut in uno claudam plura,
mors exercet sua iura
.....
Sunt latrones, non latores,
legis Dei destructores;
Simon sedet inter eos,
multos facit esse reos.
.....
Illi donat diadema,
qui nunc erat anathema;
iste Simon confundatur,
cui tantum posse datur.¹⁵

and

modo, fratres, iudicate
(neque vestro pro Primate
aberrantes declinate
a sincera veritate.)

¹³In Schmeller's edition, 137, 48, fol. 29B, of the *Amatoria*, *Potatoria*, *Luxoria*.

¹⁴Helen Waddell. Medieval Latin Lyrics. Constable and Co. Ltd., London, 1927, 202.

¹⁵In Schmeller's edition, 43, 73, fol. 46B.

an sit dignus dignitate
 vel privandus potestate
 senex carens castitate
 et sacerdos honestate,
 civitate, pietate,
 plenus omni foeditate
 qui, exclusa caritate
 nos in tanta vilitate
 quorum fama patet late
 sic tractavit. Iudicate!

This is written with a splendid assurance in a measure later to be employed with such mastery by Hugh Primas of Orleans, who exercised such a fascination over his contemporaries, and of whom Serlo of Wilton wrote:

Cum vinum poto, faciem lavo, corpore loto
 tum fundo lacrymas, tum versificor quasi Primas.

It is among such a motley crew of fatherless songs and lyrics -- love children of the Muses -- that we suddenly find the ¹⁶
Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini, a truly comprehensive Nativity play uniting all the dramatic themes of Christmas. It is followed immediately by a ¹⁷
Ludus Paschalis sive de Passione Domini.

If we include the Fragmenta Burana, in the whole collection of the Carmina Burana we have the following six plays.

¹⁶In Schmeller's edition, No. CCII, fol. 99, 80 et seq.

¹⁷Ibid. No. CCIII, fol. 107, p. 95.

1. Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini
18
2. Ludus De Rege Egypti
19
3. Ludus breviter de Passione
20
4. Ludus Paschalis
21
5. Ludus de Passione Domini
22
6. Peregrinus

All are interesting specimens of the Liturgical Drama of the Middle Ages.

¹⁸Ibid. No. CCII from sec. 45 to the end.

¹⁹Meyer: Fragmenta burana. MS 4660a, 123-125, plates 5, 6, 7.

²⁰Ibid. 126-130. Plates 8-11.

²¹In Schmeller's edition, No. CCIII, 95 seq.

²²Meyer: Fragmenta burana, 136-137. Plates 12, 13.

CHAPTER IV

LUDI

The origin of the Medieval Drama was in religion. On certain solemn feasts of the Church the Office was interrupted and the religious event being celebrated was represented before the assembly of the people by the priests. At first the text was brief, taken directly from the Office of the day. It was in prose and of course in Latin, the language of the Liturgy.

Soon versification was introduced, the earliest samples of these verses being the tropes. The earliest of these tropes have come to us from the tenth century. They are taken from the Office of the Easter service for the monastery of St. Gall. This early embryonic liturgical drama of our extant collection was in Latin and in verse, but with the passing of time deliberate additions had been made, prose was still employed as well and the vernacular finally was introduced to supplant the Latin. Meanwhile individual inventiveness asserted itself and the religious drama passed from under the control of the Church.

Apart from the general satisfaction that we gain from associating the invention of these tropes with the first liturgical drama, our knowledge of the cultural background from which the "ludi" of the Middle Ages have come, or of the local

conditions under which they were produced, is so very inadequate that we are helped by it scarcely any further. To hope to find something definite concerning their origins is rather to doom oneself to discouragement.

"Ce sont là par malheur des recherches que la critique la plus ingénieuse et la plus savante ne saurait elle-même se flatter de rendre fructueuses."¹ is Du Méril's conclusion after rather extensive research work.

We do know that this Liturgical Drama, begun in the early tenth century, grew rapidly and seems to have achieved its essential development between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries. By the end of the thirteenth century there had been composed all the more highly elaborated pieces known to the Church, the Easter and the Epiphany plays, the longer Passion Play of the Carmina Burana, the studied dramatizations of subjects taken from the Old Testament, the "miracula" of St. Nicholas, -- the first Miracle Play, composed in 1087 by Jean Bodel of Anas, the faithful follower of St. Louis on the Crusade to Egypt, for the translation of the relics of the fourth century martyr. There were finally four different versions composed to celebrate the Feast of this saint.

"But it is humbling," says Young, "to record one's ignorance of the dramatic traditions of St. Benoît-sur-Loire

¹E. P. Du Méril. Les Origines Latines du Théâtre Moderne. Paris, 1897. Intro.

which made possible the Fleury play-book (that is, the 'miracula'² of St. Nicholas) in its thirteenth-century form." With the ending of the thirteenth century compositions did not altogether cease. There were dramatizations for all the principal Feasts of the year, for the Presentation of the Virgin Mary and for the Feast of her Assumption. Of the Miracles of the Virgin Mary in the fourteenth we have forty-two extant. But in general the more important themes had been worked out before the opening of the fourteenth century. The fifteenth is the century of the Mystery Plays, the great dramatic creations anterior to the Renaissance. The Reformation finally sapped the life of the Medieval religious drama.

Just as the scholars' lyric of the twelfth century bursts forth suddenly with a new wonder upon us, "as new a miracle," says Helen Waddell, "as the first crocus," so the religious drama of the Middle Ages strikes us with the abruptness of its spontaneous new birth. It is an independent creation, not continuing any ancient tradition, not an importation from elsewhere. There is nothing to fill the gap between the Roman classical drama and the miracle and mystery plays of the Church except the unique production of the six plays of the nun Hroswitha of Gandersheim in the tenth century, which even so is notably wide and empty.

²Karl Young. The Drama of the Medieval Church. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1933.

There were, of course, the very dramatic recitals of St. Ephrem away back in the fourth century (obit. June 373) in his "merme" or sermons and in his "madrache," his instructions in verse, in some of which, notably in his hymn on the Epiphany and on the Resurrection, he is definitely a pioneer of genius. In his Fourth Sermon: In Natalem Domini,³ he recounts the Nativity of Christ in a manner that is altogether quite dramatic, though it is not of course drama. Notable also is the dramatization of the birth of Christ in the early centuries by a Romanus, probably "Romanus, the Singer," the most important representative of rhythmic poetry in the Greek Church.

With the fall of the Roman Empire the greater part of the dramatic achievement of the ancient world passed into obscurity. By the tenth century the tragedy and comedy of Greece were, at least in Western Europe, virtually forgotten. Of the Roman drama a limited though still substantial amount survived. Seneca's ten tragedies, though they had probably never been acted in antiquity, were still well known at least before the ninth century. There is no indication of a considerable reading of them before the fourteenth century. Of the reading of Plautus we have scant information. Terence alone, of the ancient dramatists

³Stephanus E. Assemani. Opera (in six vols.), 2, 414-418: for photostat copies of Ephrem's poem see Meyer's Fragmenta Burana, 149 et seq.

retained something of his fame. Hroswitha wrote to un-Terence Terence.

There were also the "commediae elegiacae" of which some twenty or more have come down to us from the periods between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries. These were brief sophisticated compositions in Latin fashioned mainly on Ovid's poems. Other entertainments of the time were the farce or mime and pantomime, mingled frequently with indecency and immorality. The "joculatores," the "jongleurs," and Germanic scop descend from the performers in these entertainments. Though containing dialogue these entertainments could scarcely be called drama.

Side by side with these varied classes of secular entertainment the Church fostered a drama of its own. It did not borrow their technique nor did it aim at any reform. Independently and haltingly it invented its own peculiar theatrical product. It could not avoid reflecting the influence of the secular plays and on the other hand the influence of the Church is seen in the secular plays themselves, as her influence is seen in the song of the Goliards, the "vagantes" -- the "gyrovagi." The Tegernsee play of Antichrist of 1160 shows this mutual influence.

The Church's drama was free from the contamination of foreign forms. It was performed within the walls of the church, worshipfully, by the ecclesiastics. It was not a spontaneous and free expression or manifestation of the life of the people,

but rather an expression of doctrine making use of the proper language of doctrine and it remained anonymous as it revolved around the life of the people. The range of subjects treated was broad, including possibly all the Old and the New Testament. Very few examples from the Old Testament remain to us, the earliest being a drama based on the sacrifice of Isaac. Most attention was given, of course, to scenes from the life of Christ especially scenes from the Resurrection and from the Nativity. These plays arose not essentially as a dramatization of the parts of the liturgy, but as deliberate embellishments and additions to it.

In considering the dramatic developments within the Liturgy for the Nativity we find the famous trope for the Introit of the Mass, "Hodie cantandus est," of which Tutilo, a monk of St. Gall of the 9th century, the doubtful inventor of tropes,⁴ seems to be the accredited author. The dramatic nature of the opening sentences of this trope

Hodie cantandus est nobis puer quem
gignebat ineffabiliter ante tempora Pater
et eundem sub tempore generavit inclyta Mater.

INTER: Quis est iste puer, quem tam
magnis preconiiis dignum vociferatis? dicite
nobis, ut conlaudatores esse possimus?

RESP: Hic enim est quem presagus et
electus symnista dei ad terras venturum
previdens longe ante praenotavit sicque praedixit...

⁴Catholic Encyclopedia. 15.

have long attracted attention and they may contain the germ from which has sprung all the liturgical drama.

Le plus ancien trope connu, le fameux 'Hodie cantandus est,' nous apparaît dans les plus anciens tropaires sous une forme visiblement dramatique... C'est le premier germe d'un future théâtre, c'est l'embryon qu'il faut presque étudier sous le microscope.⁵

The development of the trope into the "ludus" or the drama can perhaps be best seen in a trope for the Introit of the third Mass, the Missa in die, for Christmas morning:

Quem queritis in presepe, pastores dicite?

Of this Christmas trope at least twenty-five manuscripts are known to exist today. This trope has no textual basis in the Vulgate or in the liturgy of Christmas and is very obviously adapted from the Quem quaeritis of Easter which we have today in the very abbreviated form of the Victimae Paschali for Easter Sunday. The presence of the question and answer form in the Quem queritis pastores, and the rubrical directions calling for two deacons chanting the question from behind the altar and their being answered by another two in front of the altar indicate somewhat of an advance, slight however, towards drama. As long as the trope remained stationary in its place as a mere introduction to the Introit it had no scope for development and it shows a complete absence of genuine impersonation. It was to begin to find its true dramatic development when it was admitted

⁵L. Gautier: Les Tropes. Paris, 1886, 218.

to have a place after the singing of the Te Deum laudamus at the end of the Office of Matins. The altar, which in the Easter trope might easily have been taken to represent the sepulchre, in the course of time might represent at Christmas-tide the "presepe." The rubrics connected with the celebrated Nativity tropes from Rouen mention definitely a separate structure as a "presepe." In it are placed two artificial figures to represent the Virgin Mary and the Child. We have here too a certain amount of characterization in the angel who introduces the action, in the "septem pueri" who represent the choir of the angels, in the actors who take the parts of the shepherds and in the two clerics who represent the "obstetrices." All this is a definite advance towards drama. A further advance was made when certain locations were given to the participants in the drama. The pueri were located in the choir-loft, the "pastores" approached the "presepe" through the portal of the choir-screen dressed in tunics and amices.

The rubrics read:

Presepe sit paratum retro altare, et imago
 Sanctae Mariae sit in eo posita. In primis
 quidam Puer ante chorum in excelso, in
 similitudinem Angeli, nativitatem Domini
 anuntiet ad quinque Canonicos quindecim
 marcharum et librarum,⁶ vel ad eorum Vicarios
 de secunda sede. Pastores intrantes per magnum

⁶Indicating their rank apparently. The meaning of 'quindecim marcharum et librarum' is not clear.

ostium chori, per medium chorum transeuntes,
tunicis et amictis indutos, hunc versum ita
dicens:

Nolite timere

again:

Sint plures pueri in vuotis ecclesiae,
quasi angeli, qui alta voce incipiant. . .

further on:

duo presbyterii dalmaticati, de majore sede,
quasi obstetrices, qui ad presepe fuerint, dicant:

Quem queritis

In this Officium Pastorum of Rouen the original trope, Quem queritis in presepe from the Introit of the Mass for Christmas has reached its highest dramatic development within the Church. It is the most important development to be found within the liturgy of Christmas. The Divine Dramatist had created the "magnum opus" of all time and the devout Christians of the Middle Ages must have loved to act out, or to see acted, the Gospel story.

Although the dramatic ceremonies of Christmas day are exceedingly meagre compared with those of the Passion or Easter week, and the extant examples of Ludi de Nativitate Domini are of relatively slight scope, yet the liturgical plays of the Christmas season constitute the most varied and the most appealing dramatic group of the liturgical year. There is a more intentional doctrinal inspiration in the liturgical drama evolved from the liturgy of Holy Week and Easter, but the

Nativity plays appeal more to humble sincere piety by their intimate picturesqueness and their variety and they are in a dramatic sense more lively.

These Nativity plays may be grouped under four classes: The Processus Prophetarum a play of the Prophets associated with the birth of Christ; a play of the shepherds, the Officium Pastores, the play of the birth of Christ performed on Christmas Day; a play, the Ordo Rachelis, "Rachel plorans filios suos et noluit consolari,"⁷ for December 28th, the commemoration of the slaughter of the Innocents; and finally the Officium Stellae, played on January 6th, the Feast of the Epiphany, commemorating the coming of the Magi. Though the liturgy of Christmas proper did contain numerous dramatic representations of drama it developed and retained within its own limits little of true drama. This it was to develop, not in remaining a drama proper to Christmas Day alone, but in its contribution to these other dramatic groups of the Christmas season. The plays for the Magi, January 6th, the Officium Stellae, for example, are much more impressive dramatically; they are many in number, are of greater variety in their content, have greater breadth of action and are as literature superior.

The medieval Church had gladly availed herself of the dramatic possibilities inherent in her recurring festivals.

⁷Matt. 2, 18. Vox in Rama audita est, ploratus, et ululatus: Rachel plorans filios suos, et noluit consolari, quia non sunt.

"The Church of the Middle Ages was the focus at which all artistic, literary and scientific efforts met, and in the service of which they worked. . . . Where else could dramatic art find another or a better origin than in the Church which had drawn all other arts into its service?"⁸ The Holy Mass is itself the supreme example of sacred drama, and all the services of the early Church were strongly dramatic in form, but it was the Divine Office which became the fountain-head of the future drama, secular as well as religious.

The pomp and majestic splendour of the Church's ceremony, so lofty in its admirable symbolism, tended towards strikingly dramatic representation, a compendium, as Bossuet, calls it, of the Old and New Testament.

L'église, inspirée de Dieu, et instruite par les saints apôtres, a tellement disposé l'année qu'on y trouve avec la vie, avec les mystères, avec la prédication de la doctrine de Jésus-Christ le vrai fruit de toutes ces choses dans les admirables vertus des ses serviteurs et dans les exemples de ses saints; enfin un mystérieux abrégé de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament et de toute l'histoire ecclésiastique.⁹

One who reflects even a little on the chanting of the Divine Office, on the variation and distribution of the chants

⁸Karl Manitius: A History of Theatrical Art. 6 vols., Vol. 3, 1041.

⁹Oraison funèbre de Marie-Therèse d'Autriche, reine de France et de Navarre.

throughout the antiphonal song with its alternating versicles and responses entrusted to two choirs, sung according to traditional chorography and interspersed with varied readings and hymns, and with the variations of posture, attitude and location, any one who assists intelligently at such a recitation of the Office will readily recognize in the Catholic liturgy the evident germs of dialogue and action which produced the religious drama.

Today the pomp of the Church's ceremonial while still impressive is far from the splendors of other days which made the great joys and sincere happiness of the faithful, particularly at Eastertide and at Christmas -- the two Festivals which are so unmistakably and so particularly Christian.

In the early centuries the night of Christmas, so brilliant with its myriad lights and candles whose bright reflections played upon the rich tapestries and colors adorning the arches and lofty pillars of the cathedrals, this sacred night was entirely given over to sacred chant and hymns and readings from the prophets and the Testament, to all the varied ritual which make this Office of the Nativity one full of movement and poetry, a long action sung, figurative, dramatic, a narration, epic and lyric at the same time, of the coming of the Saviour of the World.

The exact place occupied by the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini, the Officium Pastorum, which had grown and

developed from the Introit, was before the beginning of the Mass.

Matins is finished, the Te Deum laudamus has been chanted, the altar has been incensed, the ministers retire from the altar to the choir, seats are placed in the front of the church for Augustine, for in this Ludus there is to be a novel innovation, the great Doctor is going to appear and to preside over the prophecies; seats are placed for Isaias and for Daniel, for the Sibyl, and for the other prophets who will sit on Augustine's right. On his left will sit the Archisynagogus and his Jews. Isaias rises, comes forward and intones his prophetic miracle:
¹⁰
 "Behold a virgin shall conceive." Then follow Daniel and the Sibyl: Aaron enters carrying a rod which alone flowers among the twelve. The Jews mock in indignation. The angel appears to Mary and sings "Ecce concipies," and the Son of God is born on earth. A Star appears to Kings in the East and the Angel brings the shepherds glad tidings of great joy.

Magnum nobis gaudium
 pastores, anuntio
 Deus se circumdedit
 carnis vestre pallis
 quem mulier non peperit
 carnali commercio,
 immo virgo permanens
 mater est ex filio

The shepherds adore the Child and returning to the hills to guard their flocks, meet the Kings who are coming to adore the

¹⁰Isaias 7, 14. Ecce virgo concipiet, et pariet filium, et vocabitur nomen eius Emmanuel.

Child and who ask them:

Pastores, dicite, quidnam vidistis? . . .

The joyful shepherds answer:

Infantem vidimus pannis involutum et
chorus angelorum laudantes salvatorem.

The soft tones of the organ are heard; the mighty voices
of the choir burst forth:

Puer natus est nobis
et filius datus est nobis
Cantate Domino canticum novum,
quia mirabilia fecit nobis. . .

It is the Introit for Christmas morning and the solemn high
Mass which is beginning.

CHAPTER V

THE LANGUAGE OF THE LUDUS

The Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini is written in the verse so distinctively the property of the disciple of the supposititious or possibly genuine Golias. It is this Goliardic verse of which St. Thomas Browne writes,

that vulgar and Taverne Musicke which makes
one man merry, and another sad, strikes in
mee a deepe fit of devotion. . . there is
something in it of Divinity more than the
eare discovers.¹

In it dactylic and trochaic dimeters and trimeters predominate. It makes plentiful use of rime of all classes and is markedly accentual.

The principle of quantitative verse is the strophic grouping of lines which contain an equal number of syllables, the lines being divided by a fixed caesura. Frequently there is the constant or sporadic ornament of a more or less developed rime. The basic characteristic of this rhythmical verse is the numbering of the syllables, which decisively differentiates it from classical verse.

¹Quoted from Thomas Bird Mosher in his Introduction to Wine, Women and Song by John Addington Symonds, Portland, Maine, 1918.

In the beginning of Roman literature Ennius had brought in the hexameter from Greece and started the long and laborious process of forcing the Latin language to conform to a foreign rhythm.

In the goliardic verse the Latin poet has freed himself from this alien allegiance and develops his own new rhythms and all the embellishment of rime.

The origin of the use of rime for the adornment of verse still remains obscure. Meyer, with others, is of the opinion² that it is related to Semitic poetry. Rime is found in early Arabic poetry of the sixth century, but it is not possible to trace with any clearness its direct influence on Latin verse. Many notable writers concede it a Celtic origin. "It is a tremendous claim to make for the Celt," writes Douglas Hyde, "that he taught Europe to rhyme; it is a claim in comparison with which, if it could be substantiated, everything else that he has done in literature pales into insignificance. Yet it has been made for him by some of the foremost European scholars."³

Prominent among these is the great German historian and philologist Zeuss, who writes:

²Wilhelm Meyer. Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur Mittellateinischen Rythmik. Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, Berlin, 1905, 6.

³Douglas Hyde. A Literary History of Ireland. T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1901, 480.

Formam poesis celticae, exemplis allatis, tam vetustioribus quam recentioribus vel hodiernis, magis ornatam esse apparet quam ullius gentis formam poeticam, ac magis ornatam in vetustioribus carminibus ipsis quam in recentioribus. Quo majore ornatu, haud dubie effectum est, ut jam inde ab illis temporibus quibus ad interitum ruebat Romanum imperium, celtica forma, primum integra, deinde ex parte, non solum in latina sed etiam aliarum linguarum carmina transumeretur atque in iis permanserit.⁴

Zeuss speaks also specifically of the influence of Irish literature on the development of the Latin poetry of the Anglo-Saxons towards the use of rime.

Magis progressa consonantia, cum frequentiore allitteratione, amplior finalis saepius trissyllaba invenitur in Anglo-Saxorum carminibus latinis; ad quos, cum ipsi principio cum ceteris Germanis non usi sint nisi allitteratione, ab Hibernis hanc formam esse transgressam putandum est, ut transiit scriptura atque ars pingendi codices et ornandi.⁵

He is even more emphatic further on:

Hanc formam orationis poeticae quis credat esse ortam primum apud poetas christianos finientis imperii Romani et transisse ad Bardos Cambrorum et in carmina gentilia Scandinavorum. Allitteratio autem si propria habenda est forma poetica Germanorum iam vetustia temporibus, iam tum cum celebrabant carminibus antiquis, quod unum apud illos memoriae et annalium genus erat, gentis suae conditores, consonantia eadam coniuncta cum finali atque intermedia putanda est celticae orationis poeticae forma antiqua culta iam a Bardis et Druidis. Apud Hibernos et Cambros poetas eidem adiunctus reperitur communiter

⁴Johann Kaspar Zeuss. Grammatica Celtica, editio H. Ebel, Berolini, apud Weidmannos. MDCCCLXXI, Maisonneuve et Cie., Paris, 977.

⁵Ibid., 946.

aequalis versuum ambitus et certus syllabarum numerus cum certa versuum collocatione, cum latini poetae imitatione saepius latina metra supposuerint; quis easdem formas Gallis cognitae negarit?⁶

That the idea of rime comes to us from the Arabic writers cannot be sustained is the opinion of Costantino Nigra: "Origo enim rimae arabicae inter fabulas omnino rejicienda est."⁷ He does not believe that rime could in any way have evolved itself from the natural progress of the Latin language and is definitely of the opinion that rime had its origin on Irish soil and among the Celtic nations:

Porro rima ex solo naturali processu latinae linguae explicari nullo modo potest. Apud Latinos nec res extitit nec nomen. ... Assonantia finalis vel rima, saeculo quarto obeunte et quinto incipiente vulgaris aevi, primum occurrit in hymnis latinis ecclesiae mediolanensis, qui sancto Ambrosio et sancto Augustino tribuuntur. Prima itaque rimae certa exempla inveniuntur in solo celtico, apud celticas gentes, in carminibus conditis a poetis qui vel celticae originis sunt, vel apud celticas gentes diu commoraverunt verisimile est, hosce hymnos mediae latinitatis constructos esse juxta formam celticae poesis, quae tunc vigeat et qui jam assonantiam finalem praebet in antiquis ejus reliquiis hucusque detectis. Profecto carmina hibernica et britannica vetustiora quae ad nos per venerunt saeculum octavum vel septimum superare non videntur. Sed temere non est affirmare celticas gentes, quae moris consuetudinisque majorum tenaces semper fuerunt, jam multo antea, primis nempe vulgaris aevi saeculis, eandem poeticam formam adhibuisse.⁸

⁶Ibid., 948.

⁷Constantinus Nigra. Glossae hibernicae veteres codicis Taurinensis. Lutetiae Parisiorum: apud A. Franck. MDCCCLXIX, intro. xxix.

⁸Ibid., intro. xxxi.

In this he sustains the opinion of Zeus, "magnae sane in his rebus auctoritatis vir," and he makes his conclusion very definite:

Concludendum est igitur, versum romanicum, accentu ligatum et pari syllabarum numero oriri potuisse ex duplicis causae concursu, nempe a naturali explicatione latinae linguae et ab exemplo, pariter efficaci, affinium celticorum populorum; sed rimam, seu assonantiam finalem, a solis celticae phonologiae legibus derivatam esse.⁹

It is definitely this rime in the poetry of the "gyrovagi" that gave their songs their great popularity, and it was quite natural that the "ludi" should also use a form of verse which easily held the popular attention.

It is not the place here to trace how the Irish monks brought their skill in riming verse to the continent of Europe, nor how far their influence was felt nor how far their wanderings took them. Strabo in the ninth century could write of them, perhaps peevishly, "Consuetudo peregrinandi iam paene in naturam conversa est."¹⁰ This rhetorical rime found its way into

Christian poetry when the feeling for quantity was on the wane and the new verse form was being introduced. It was not altogether unknown to the Latin writers of antiquity. It had appeared on rare occasions in classical poetry as something

⁹Ibid., intro., xxxii.

¹⁰Walafried Strabo. Monumenta Germanica. 2, 30.

consciously borrowed from the rhetorical prose. It is an occasional ornament, but never applied to the whole of a poem. It is more of a parallelism joined with an elementary assonance -- a marked feature of early Latin rhetorical prose -- rather than rime as later ages knew it. Cicero gives some verses from the Eumenides of Ennius written in this rhetorical rime in iambic trimeter

coelum nitescere, arbores frondescere
vites laetificae, pampinis pubescere,
rami bacarum ubertate incurvescere.¹¹

and also

haec omnia vidi inflammari
Priamo vi vitam evitari
Iovis aram sanguine turpari.¹²

Cicero himself is said to have used this rhetorical rime in his verses on his consulship. The Christian writers of antiquity show some slight traces too of their feeling for rime. Apuleius had written in the second century

aut ara floribus redimita
aut quercus cornibus onerata
aut fagus pelliibus coronata.¹³

Cyprian also has traces of this rimed prose in his instructions:

¹¹Cicero. Tusculanarum disputationum. 1, 69.

¹²Ibid., 1, 85.

¹³Vide Africa and the beginnings of Christian-Latin Literature, American Journal of Theology, January 1907, 104.

si avaritia prostrata est
 exurgit libido:
 si libido compressa est
 succedit ambitio:
 si ambitio contempta est, ira exasperat,
 inflat superbia, violentia invitat:
 invidia concurdiam rumpit
 amicitiam zelus abscindit.¹⁴

Such rimes too were used by Augustine:

eo nascente superi novo honore claruerunt,
 quo moriente inferi novo timore tremuerunt,
 quo resurgente discipuli novo amore exarserunt,
 quo ascendente caeli novo obsequio patuerunt.¹⁵

In another place we have a further example:

vigilat iste, ut laudet medicum liberatus,
 vigilat ille, ut blasphemet iudicem condemmatus
 vigilat iste, mentibus piis fervens et lucescens,
 vigilat ille dentibus suis frendens et tabescens,
 denique istum caritas
 illum iniquitas
 istum christianus vigor
 illum diabolicus livor
 nequaquam dormire in hac celebritate permittit.¹⁶

This rhetorical rime is to be found too in the genuine hymns of the great Ambrose of Milan with whom the real history of hymns in the West begins. But with Ambrose the presence of rime can largely be explained by the accident of construction as in these first two stanzas of his Intende qui regis Israel, better known as Veni redemptor gentium

¹⁴Cyprian. De mortalite. 5.

¹⁵J. P. Migne. Patrologiae cursus completus. Paris, 1845, 38, 1027, sermo 199.

¹⁶Op. cit., 38, 1087, sermo 219.

veni redemptor gentium,
ostende partum virginis,
miretur omne saeculum,
talis decet partus deum.

non ex virili semine,
sed mystico spiramine
verbum dei factum est caro,
fructusque ventris floruit.¹⁷

Aurelius Clemens Prudentius shows traces of this rime in some of his verses written in the Ambrosian iambic dimeter.

peccator intueberis
celsum coruscis nubibus,
deiectus ipse et irritis
plangens reatum fletibus.¹⁸

But it remained for Caelius Sedulius, in the fifth century probably an Irishman like Sedulius, called Scotus, to be the first hymn-writer to make any extensive use of rime. In his Christmas hymn, A solis ortus cardine, rime is plentiful. The hymn is written in quantitative iambic dimeters. It is an abecedarian, composed of twenty-three strophes, each of which commences with a letter of the alphabet in regular order. In the verse there is a significant tendency for the accent and the ictus to fall together and we find definite indications of the transition to the characteristic medieval hymn. The first two strophes are:

A solis ortus cardine
ad usque terrae limitem
Christum canamus principem
natum Maria virgine.

¹⁷ Sancti Ambrosii, Mediolanensis episcopi. Opera omnia.
Paris, apud Gauthier Fratrem et Soc., 1836, 201, hymnus IV.

¹⁸ Patrologiae cursus completus 59, 899, 101.

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B eatus auctor saeculi
servile corpus induit
ut carne carnem liberans
non perderet quod condidit.¹⁹

Such poetry made Sedulius the favorite poet of the Middle Ages. The simple yet distinguished diction and the conciseness and ease of the style led the Church to take parts of this hymn, A solis ortus cardine, for its office of Christmas. It is interesting to note, too, that two lines from his Carmen Paschale serve for the Introit for Masses in honor of the Blessed Virgin:

Salve santa parens
enixa puerpera Regem.²⁰

Venantius Fortunatus, in the next century, gives us well-wrought rime in his well-known Vexilla Regis:

arbor decora et fulgida
ornata regis purpura,
electa digno stipite
tam sancta membra tangere²¹

Again in his hymn to Our Lady:

A gloriosa domina
excelsa super sidera
qui te creavit provide
lactasti sacro ubere²²

Here the rimes are most elaborate. Not only does each verse end on the same letter but there are excellent alternate two-syllable rimes as in the following verses where he describes

¹⁹Ibid., 19, 765.

²⁰Patrologiae Cursus Completus, 19, 599. Carmen Paschale 2, 63-64.

²¹Op. cit., 88, 95.

²²Op. cit., 88, 266.

his monastery:

navis numquam turbata,
quamvis fluctibus tonsa,
nuptus quoque parata
regi domino sponsa.

domus deliciis plena
super petram constructa,
necnon vinea vera,
ex Aegypto transducta.

certe civitas firma,
fortis aqua munita,
gloriosa ac digna
supra montem posita.²³

Until the eleventh century rime continued to appear in liturgical verse, though the rhythmical poetry did not succeed in entirely replacing the ancient quantitative verse; the hexameter, the elegiac and to some extent the sapphic measures were persistently imitated throughout the whole of the Middle Ages. This Christian poetry, beginning under the influence of antique traditions to which it turned again and again in times of classical revival, was able in the end to create for itself its own traditional form, a form which alone was capable of expressing the meaning and the emotion of western Christianity.

During the twelfth century in Germany, the home of the early sequences, religious and liturgical verse did not flourish. For the best Latin poetry we must turn to the Carmina Burana. Here the forms of the secular or quasi-secular poetry were borrowed from the Church, to which the poets owed some sort of

²³Text: F. E. Warren. The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church. Oxford, 1881.

allegiance. Rime had reached its perfection, and the rules of accent were established. The technical difficulties once overcome, there could be no serious question of a return to pale imitations of classical form, especially where liturgical poetry was concerned. From the eleventh and twelfth centuries, down into the thirteenth and onward the new forms assume an increasing beauty and capacity for expressing what was most profound and permanent in medieval experience. New varieties of structure were invented, new combinations of accent and rime were tried out and all the secrets of rhythmical verse were disclosed preparing the way for the marvellous outpourings of modern poetry. The Franciscan revival breathed a new spirit. It perfected even more the verse forms, filling them with an emotion, till then unknown, of personal pity and pathos, and influenced profoundly the lyric poetry of a later world. By the fourteenth century the Latin language could no longer compete with the national languages of Europe. By the fifteenth medieval rhythmical Latin verse had its end. The liturgical verse of the Middle Ages appeared barbarous. The sequences were abolished with few exceptions, and the hymns which remain in the Breviary are tolerated only on account of their venerable antiquity and after they had undergone a process of adaptation in some cases.

In the vast majority of the stanzas of the Ludus de Nativitate Domini, two constituent elements of the true medieval poetry dominate: rhythm and rime. The metrical part is comprised in a few rare hexameters as when Mary says

44. Omnia dura pati, vitando pericula nati
mater sum presto. Iam vadam. Tu comes esto!

and when Herod summons the Wise Men

50. Scire volo, quae causa rei, vel qualiter ipsa
numina placentur. Sapientes ergo vocentur.

There are a few elegiac strophes as in Herod's inquiry from the Wise Men as to the reason for the overthrow of the idols

53. Dicite, quid nobis et quid portendat Egypto
mira mali species prodigiosa quidem?

Among the rhythmic verses most used are the iambic dimeter and the trochaic dimeter sometimes unadulterated, sometimes mixed among themselves, sometimes catalectic and at times hyper-catalectic.

For example in the beginning of the Ludus we read

Ecce virgo pariet
sine viri semine
per quod mundum obluet
a peccati crimine.

de venturo gaudeat
Judaea numine
et nunc caeca fugiat
ab erroris lumine.

Here we have two stanzas of four trochaic dimeters catalectic with the well marked rime scheme a. b. a. b.

The prophecy of Daniel in 2, is in trochaic dimeters accentual but with the rime a. b. c. b. d. b. c. b., that is in stanzas of eight verses in which the even numbers rime among themselves.

2. O Judea misera
tua cadet unctio
cum rex regum veniet
ab excelso solio,
cum retento floridae

castitatis lilio
virgo regem pariet
felix puerperio.

This same rime scheme holds for the prophecy of the Sibyl in 3, which is in dactylic dimeters accentual.

3. Hec stelle novitas
fert novum nuntium,
quod virgo nesciens
viri commercium
et virgo permanens
post puerperium
salutem populo
pariet filium.

In general it may be said that the Ludus is written in iambic, dactylic or trochaic dimeters accentual, pure or intermixed with the rime striking on the even lines. The result is that we have a rapidly moving verse, musical through its recurrent rimes and therefore easily adapted to be sung; verses of which the poetry of the "vagantes" is composed, verses in which the goliards delighted and which have in the Codex 4460, which contains this Ludus, their greatest and most precious monument.

The language is in very few instances archaic. The thought always explicit, direct and forceful. There is a great economy of words. What has to be said is said directly, plainly and unadorned. The Ludus is definitely didactic and devotional: the teaching of its doctrine well within the comprehension of the "ignobile vulgus" before whom it was intended to be played. The original text, now in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich, MS. lat. 4460, fol. 99^R, has

musical notation for the spoken text throughout with the following exceptions:

7. the speech of the leader of the choir, the "episcopus puerorum."

14. for the repeated "res miranda" of Augustine and the repeated "res neganda" of the Archisynagogus. It is likely that the notation as given for these two phrases, the first time they were used, is intended to be used here also.

17. the salutation of Elizabeth "Unde hoc mihi," and the obscure line in this same section, "Tu quae portabis p. h. et an gen."

For the following translation the text used has been Schmeller's as published in Stuttgart in 1847: Lateinische und deutsche Lieder und Gedichte einer Handschrift des XIII Jahrhunderts aus Benedictbeuren auf der K. Bibliothek zu Muenchen. Stuttgart, Litterarischer Verein, 1847. Ed. Johann Andreas Schmeller. The Ludus begins on page 80.

Throughout the original play in Latin the stage directions, the rubrics, are given in the subjunctive mood: "Primo ponatur sedes . . ." "surgat Isaias. . .," "iterum cantet. . .," and so on. In the translation given here the indicative mood replaces the subjunctive . . . "Isaias rises up. . .," "again is sung,. . ." as the continued use of the subjunctive in English is apt to tire and to become distracting.

CHAPTER VI

A NATIVITY PLAY OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

A seat is arranged first in the fore part of the Church for Augustine: and Augustine will have on his right hand Isaias, Daniel and other Prophets: on his left and the Archisynagogus and his Jews. Then Isaias rises up with his prophecy and chants:

1. Behold a virgin shall conceive, without the seed of any man. In this way the world will be purified from the stain of its sin: Let the people of Israel rejoice in the God that is to come, and, blinded now, let it flee from the pathways of its error.¹

Then: Behold a virgin will conceive. Again he sings: The Lord² will give to him the house of David.

Then Daniel comes forward reciting his prophecy:

¹Isaias 7, 14. Ecco virgo concipiet, et pariet filium, et vocabitur nomen eius Emmanuel. I have translated "lumine" which E. F. Du Ménil in his Les origines latines du théâtre moderne. Paris, 1897, 188 note, prefers claiming Schmeller is in error in using the word "lumine." See Bibliothek des Litterarischer Vereins in Stuttgart. 16. edited by Johann Andreas Schmeller. The verse, as amended, then reads: "et nunc caeca fugiat ab erroris limine." Karl Young also has "limine". Karl Young. The Drama of the Medieval Church. The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1933, 72.

²Luke 1, 32. Hic erit magnus, et Filius Altissimi vocabitur, et dabit illi Dominus Deus sedem David patris ejus, et regnabit in domo Jacob in aeternum.

Cf. Isaias 22, 22. Et dabo clavem domus David super humerum ejus.

2. O unfortunate Judea, lay aside your proud presumption, when the king of kings shall come from his lofty throne on high; when preserving all the whiteness of the flower of her purity, the virgin shall bring forth the king, happy in her wondrous offspring.

O unfortunate Judea, seated in your seat of darkness, put from you the heavy stain of your deadly crime, and happy in the joy of such noble birth, yield not to the enticings of error.

Then is sung:

I looked into the vision of the night.³

In the third place the Sibyl comes forward with gestures and fixing her eyes upon the star with a leisurely gesture, sings:

3. This new star new tidings brings, that a virgin, having commerce with no man, and remaining a virgin after giving birth, will bring forth a son, saviour of the world. A new offspring, in a new form, will come from heaven to the bosom of his mother, making blessed her womb who deserved to purge away our sins. Into her womb will come a new flower when an immaculate virgin will bring forth a son who will overcome the threats of the deadly enemy, and a new king will mark the beginning of a new era.

³Cf. Daniel 7, 7. "Post haec aspiciebam in visione noctis, et ecce bestia quarta terribilis, atque mirabilis, et fortis nimis; dentes ferreos habebat magnos, comedens atque comminuens, et reliqua pedibus suis conculcans; dissimilis autem erat ceteris bestiis quas videram ante eam, et habebat cornua decem." And also: Daniel 7, 13. "Aspiciebam ergo in visione noctis, et ecce cum nubibus caeli quasi Filius hominis veniebat, et usque ad antiquum dierum pervenit. Et in conspectu ejus obtulerunt eum; et dedit ei potestatem, et honorem et regnum; et omnes populi, tribus et linguae ipsi servient: potestas ejus, potestas aeterna, quae non auferetur, et regnum ejus, quod non corrumpetur.

From heaven will come a king with a mighty name to cement the pact between God and man: and nourished at the breasts of a stainless virgin will blot out the penalty of the sins of the world.

Then these verses are sung:

4
Judicii signum tellus etc.

Then Aaron, the fourth prophet advances carrying in his hand the rod, which placed upon the altar among the twelve dry rods, alone
5
sprouts flowers. This personage the chorus conducts forward and sings the response:

6
Hail, noble rod,

4 The words are from the opening verse of the prophecy of the Sibyl of Erythrea, "quae inter alias Sibyllas cognoscitur de Christo evidentialia multa cecinisse," as quoted by Saint Augustine. De civitate dei. 18. 23.

Judicii signum tellus sudore madescet.
E coelo rex adveniet per saecula futurus;
Scilicet in carne praesens ut judicet orbem.
Unde Deum cernent incredulus atque fidelis
Celsum cum sanctis, aevi jam termino in ipso.

There are twenty-seven verses in the prophecy, the initial letter of each verse going to form, in order, in the original Greek, the acrostic: Jesus Christus Dei Filius Salvator:

The prophecy, as recited in its entirety by the Sibyl, is found also in a lectionary of the twelfth century from Arles, used as the sixth "lectio" at Matins during the Christmas season (see MS. lat., 1018 Lectionarium Arelatense saec. XII-XIII. Paris. Bibliothèque Nationale).

It is used also, as spoken by the Sibyl (the first five verses only), in the Ordo Prophetarum from the cathedral of Laon. Laon, Bibliothèque de la Ville, MS. 263, Troparium-Hymnarium Laudunense sec. XIII.

5 Numbers 17, 8. Sequenti die regressus invenit germinasse virgam Aaron in domo Levi: et turgentibus gemmis eruperant flores, qui foliis dilatatis, in amygdalas deformati sunt.

6 Hartker has the following verses: Salve, nobilis virga Jesse; salve, flos campi, Maria, unde est liliū convallium Versus: Odor tuus super cuncta, pretiosa unguenta favus distillans, labia tua mel et lac sub lingua tua. B. Hartker. Antiphonale du B. Hartker, published in facsimile in Paléographie musicale, 2 série. Solesmes 1900, 304.

And Aaron sings this prophecy:

4. Behold in an unusual manner our rod of almond flourishes. The fruit is Christ, but the tree is the blessed virgin.

and he sings:

5. As this rod has burgeoned, deprived of all nourishment, so the virgin will give birth to a son without any detriment to her virginity. As this rod became fruitful not by any fullness of nature, but to signify the mystery to be accomplished in the virgin, so the womb of the virgin will remain closed when by the grace of the spirit she will bring forth her son.

In the fifth place comes Balaam, seated on an ass and sings: ⁷

I shall go. I shall go, and I shall curse this people.

Whom an angel, with a naked sword runs to meet:

Be careful, be careful that you speak nothing but what I shall tell you.⁸

And the ass on which Balaam is seated, frightened, withdraws a little. Then the Angel goes again towards Balaam and Balaam sings thus:

⁹

A star shall rise out from Jacob.

⁷Numbers 22, 21 et seq., surrexit Balaam mane, et strata asina sua profectus est cum eis. Et iratus est Deus. Stetitque angelus Domini in via contra Balaam, et duos pueros habebat secum. Cernens asina angelum stantem in via, evaginato gladio, avertit se de itinere et ibat per agrum.

⁸Num., 22, 35. Ait angelus: vade cum istis, et cave ne aliquid quam praecepero tibi loquaris.

⁹Num., 24, 15 et seq. Dixit Balaam, filius Beor: ... Videbo eum, sed non modo; intuebor illum, sed non prope. Orietur stella ex Jacob et consurget virga de Israel; et percutiet duces Moab, vastabitque omnes filios Seth.

The Archisynagogus with his Jews, having heard the prophecies, is loud in his opposition and pushing his companion, moving his head and all his body, stamping with his foot upon the ground and even with his stick, imitating in every detail the gestures of the Jewish people, and full of indignation says to his companions:

6. Tell me, what means this whitened wall¹⁰
 Tell me, what this deformer of the truth says
 Tell me, what is this thing I have heard so often; I should like to know all the succession of these events.

I imagine I have heard them say such things as that a virgin, without the intervention of man, will give birth. Oh what a simplicity makes these people believe that a camel can be the descendent of an ox.

On hearing the tumult and the error of the Jews, the leader of¹¹
 the choir, sings:

7. Empty are the words of these men, foreign
 are their sentiments; rage has possessed
 them and the licence of wine-bibbers, but

¹⁰Actus. Apostolorum. 23, 2. Princeps autem sacerdotum Ananias praecepit adstantibus sibi percutere os ejus. Tunc Paulus dixit ad eum: Percutiet te Deus, paries dealbate. Cf. Matthew 23, 27, where Christ says to the scribes and Pharisses: Vae vobis scribae et pharisaei hypocritae, quia similes estis sepulcris dealbatis.

¹¹The rubric in the text has, "episcopus puerorum." He was the leader of the choir-boys, one from among them chosen to be their leader. There is no musical notation given in the text for his speech. Du Ménil deduces from his part in the play proof that the Ludus was definitely presented at Christmas-time, and the idea of having an "episcopus puerorum" had originally nothing in it of grotesque or irreligious. Du Ménil. Op. cit., 191 note.

we had better have recourse to the mind of Augustine: he will put an end to the dispute.¹²

Immediately the prophets advance to Augustine, and say:

8. This speech of the Jews, to which the dregs of ancient error still cling, offers us much opposition. They scoff as we speak of Christ, and they bring forth the reasonings of their own minds.

Augustine answers:

9. Here to us let them manifest the secrets hidden in the darkness: let us see this people, slaves of error, so that the error may be retarded, the subject matter being shown them, and that the meaning of the scripture, closed by them, may be thrown open.

The Archisynagogus advances with a great noise which he and his followers make; Augustine says to them:

10. Open now your ears, o unfortunate Judea. In another form the King of Kings will come, He nourishing himself at the breast of his virgin mother, will seal the pact twixt God and man.

The Archisynagogus answers with unmeasured laughter:

¹²Du Méril finds this appeal to the authority of St. Augustine, who is presiding over the dramatic representation, and who is judge of all that happens, a proof that Augustine himself either organised such shows possibly, or at least that they date back to a time when his memory was still verdant and all powerful. One cannot imagine that the organisers of this dramatic show would have introduced him through some fantasy or thru the veneration of the Augustinians for their founder. The introduction of an "episcopus puerorum," without any necessity for it, shows that this Ludus was not destined to be played in the monastery, and, too, one would hardly believe that the Canons Regular would have arbitrarily placed these dramas under the protection of their Founder, unless some former remembrance would have authorised their doing so. Du Méril. Op. cit., 190 note.

11. O most wise Augustine, certainly you have reached the lowest depth of your reasoning when you affirm that what human reason denies will come to pass. For if a Virgin will give birth without the intervention of man, then that will be the destruction of nature and all things will be in confusion. You speak absurd things, afflicted with original ignorance, if you do not see that that which is just will come to pass. For if a virgin shall give birth, as these children prophecy,¹³ nature by its own right can be overcome. When a virgin shall conceive then, O Xanthus¹⁴ direct your course backward to your source. The wolf will flee from the lamb, the plains become mountains.

If you pay heed to the present and recall the past, you will understand that it cannot be that a virgin become a mother as the prattling prophets keep saying. But if a virgin should conceive, and if by chance she should give birth, without contact with any man beforehand, then the law teaches and will declare that it is question of a myth. That from an immaculate virgin might be born a son is the highest of folly to believe, there is no sense in it. Therefore let our adversary answer either our weighty objection, or let him retire, a messenger of error, and covered with confusion.

With solemn and discreet voice Augustine answered:

12. In the happy fulfilling of this one fact alone, human arguments and sophistry are lame and halting: reason teaches in fact that nature must not be cast aside if on some occasion you should see something outside the usual laws of nature.

¹³The choir-boys who chant the prophecies.

¹⁴The copious and swift (Iliad 21, 124) river of Troy, which indignant roars (Il. 21, 350) between banks spread with flowers and shaded with trees (Il. 2, 46).

The Archsynagogus answers:

The thought that a dead body can have movement must be discarded and schoolboys can even read this in Aristotle, but this rule of yours is refuted when there is question of a virgin becoming a mother.

Augustine says:

13. Do not call it a myth that a virgin will conceive, that is, that remaining a virgin she may bring forth a son.

From Judea itself many an example has come to us, contradicting you and favoring us. As in a solid glass the rays of the sun penetrate, and go through it completely, so into the womb of the virgin will come the son of the father supreme nor will he

 15 The meaning of the text here is obscure. The text is:

Homo mortuus,
 in adiecto ponitur,
 quod in Aristotile
 pueris exprimitur;
 sed haec vestra regula
 tunc repulsam patitur,
 cum de matre virgine
 sermo nobis oritur!

The meter in the first verse, after a previous long succession of complete verses, is suddenly deficient. As the text stands, the argument of the Archisynagogus is meaningless. Some idea of life or motion, contrary to the idea of "homo mortuus" is called for. Du Ménil suggests the word "movens," as supplying both for the meaning and the meter:

Homo mortuus movens
 in adiecto ponitur

Du Ménil. Op. cit., 193 note. I have used this suggestion in the translation.

cause it any detriment.

16 The metrical vivacity, the vehement hilarity of the Archisynagogus and Augustine's crowning analogy of the sheet of glass unharmed by the penetrating rays of the sun are all peculiar to the present play. Karl Young. Op. cit., 193.

The Archisynagogus represents the whole body of unbelieving Jews. The prominence given to Augustine in the play may come from the influence of his work: De altercatione ecclesiae et synagogus dialogus. The genesis of this lengthy disputation may be found in the epigram of Hildebert of Tours

Virginitatis peperit sed si quis quomodo quaerit

Non est nosse meum, sed scio posse Deum.

(See Patrologiae cursus completus: Patrologia Latina, ed. J. P. Migne. Paris, 1844-64, 171, 1282.)

The altercation of the Church with the Synagogue is found in several liturgies for the octave of the Nativity. From the liturgy it easily passed into the religious drama. Compare the following stanzas from the Virgo, Mater Salvatoris, attributed to Adam of St. Victor:

6. Plebs Hebraea iam tabescet,
Multa sciens Deum nescit;
Sed gentilis fide crescit
Visa Christi facie

7. Snagoga pridem cara,
Fide fulgens et praeclara,
Vilis iacet et ignara
Maiestatis parvuli;

8. Seges Christi prius rara,
Mente rudis et amara,
Contemplatur luce clara
Salvatorem saeculi

9. Synagoga, caeca doles,
Quia Sarae crescit proles,
Cum ancillae prolem moles
Gravis premat criminum;

10. Tu tabescis et laboras,
Sara ridet, dum tu ploras,
Quia novit, quem ignoras,
Redemptorem hominum.

See Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi, 54, 161.

Then Augustine begins to sing: Laetabundus.¹⁷ He sings the first verse, the prophets sing the second:

14. Of an immaculate virgin is born the king of kings.
O wondrous event!

¹⁷From the casual way in which the Laetabundus is introduced it would appear that this Christmas sequence, of French origin from the twelfth century or even earlier, was well known at the time the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini was written. The complete sequence, which was also used for the Feast of the Circumcision and for the Epiphany and later for various votive Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is given as follows in Blume and Bannister, Anal. Hymn., 5:

1. Laetabundus
exsultet fidelis chorus,
Alleluia;
2. Regem regum
intactae profudit torus;
Res miranda.
3. Angelus consilii
natus est de virgine,
Sol de stella,
4. Sol occasum nesciens,
stella semper rutilans,
Semper clara.
5. Sicut sidus radium,
profert virgo filium
Pari forma;
6. Neque sidus radio
neque mater filio
Fit corrupta.
7. Cedrus alta Libani
conformatur hyssopo
Valle nostra;
8. Verbum, mens altissimi,
corporari passum est
Carne sumpta.

The Archisynagogus with his followers says:

A story unworthy of credence!

Augustine with his followers continues:

A wondrous event!

17(continued)

9. Isaias cecinit;
synagoga meminit
nunquam tamen desinit
Esse caeca;
10. Si non suis vatibus,
credat vel gentilibus
Sibyllinis versibus
Haec praedicta.
11. Infelix, prospera,
crede vel vetera;
cur damnaberis, gens misera?
12. Quem docet litera,
natum considera;
ipsum genuit puerpera.

Note that stanzas 5 and 6 as given above from the text of the Anal. Hymn. are omitted in the Ludus.

The Anal. Hymn. text has in stanza 8,

Verbum, mens altissimi,
corporari passum est
Carne sumpta.

Schmeller's text in the Ludus has

Verbum ens altissimi

The Archisynagogus again with his followers takes up the refrain:

18
Unworthy of credence!

This is repeated many times. Then Augustine begins again:

15. The Angel of the Counsel is born of a virgin:
of a star the sun is born.¹⁹

The prophets answer:

O sun that knows no setting, star forever
shining,
always bright.

Augustine says:

The cedar of Libanus has become like to
the hyssop in the valley.

The prophets say:

The word of the Most High deigned to take
on flesh assuming a human body.

¹⁸The repeated jingling of this rimed refrain is interesting
as is also the clash of the voices of the choirs.

Augustinus cum suis:

Res miranda!

Archisynagogus cum suis:

Res neganda!

Iterum Augustinus cum suis:

Res miranda!

Iterum Archisynagogus cum suis:

Res neganda!

Hoc fiat pluries.

¹⁹Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis: cujus
imperium super humerum ejus: et vocabitur nomen ejus,
magni consilii Angelus. From the Introit of the third
mass -- Missa in die -- of Christmas.

After this Augustine says:

Well has Isaias foretold this, well does the Synagogus remember it; but not yet has it ceased from being blind to the truth.

The prophets answer:

If not their own prophets, let them at least believe the pagans, for all these things were foretold in the Sibyl's verses.

Then Augustine and all the people sing:

16. Unfortunate people, hasten to believe at least the sayings of the ancients; why do you wish to be condemned, oh wretched race. Consider the child that is born, the very one of whom the scripture spoke, him his mother bore.

Augustine alone sings:

17. Let the Jews know that, agreeing with us about the Christ, with a new joy they should hail this new birth in the hope of a new salvation which those have who await his coming. Let them believe that he is to come, and with us let them expect his coming saying: This new king will be the saviour of the world.

During the singing the Archisynagogus makes a lot of noise, moving his body and his head, scoffing at what he hears:

At the conclusion of this, a passage is made for the prophets either that they may retire or may be seated in their proper places according to the dignity of the representation. 20

²⁰From the pomp and ceremony introduced in such places as this it happened that the "ludi" eventually moved out of the church, lost their religious character and degenerated into mere entertainment.

Then the Angel appears to Mary as she is engaged in her womanly tasks, and says:

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. ²¹

he continues:

Behold, thou wilt conceive (in thy womb) and bring forth a son. ²²

Mary greatly surprised says:

How can this be done, for I know not man. ²³

The Angel answers:

The Holy Ghost will come upon thee, etc. ²⁴
and therefore that which will be born of thee, etc.

Mary answers:

Behold the handmaid of the Lord, etc. ²⁵

²¹What follows here is a delightful and very concise presentation of the Annunciation, a scene which even to our minds to-day fits in very appropriately here before the Nativity proper. To the people of the Middle Ages it had an even greater propriety, since from the eleventh century on many churches, following the established custom of the Spanish Church, celebrated the Feast of the Annunciation not during Lent, on March 25th, but on the Wednesday of the December ember days, the Wednesday after December 13th. The Ludus follows closely the gospel text as given in Luke 1, 28 et seq.
et ingressus angelus ad eam,
dixit: Ave gratia plena;
Dominus tecum.

²²Luke 1, 31. ecce concipies in utero, et paries filium.

²³Luke 1, 34. quomodo fiet istud, quoniam virum non cognosco?

²⁴Luke 1, 35. Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te, et virtus Altissimi obumbrabit tibi: ideoque et quod ex te nascetur Sanctum, vocabitur Filius Dei.

²⁵Luke 1, 38. Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

Then Mary moves casually about, in no way thinking about her cousin Elizabeth advanced in years, already carrying John in her womb. Elizabeth salutes her and says:

26

And whence is this to me.

and she sings:

27

When the voice of your salutation sounded.

And she says:

28

Blessed art thou amongst women, etc.
You will bear p. h. et an gen.

Mary answers:

26 Luke 1, 43. Et unde hoc mihi ut veniat mater Domini mei ad me?

27 Luke 1, 44. Ecce enim ut facta est vox salutationis tuae
in auribus meis, exsultavit in gaudio infans
in utero meo.

28 Luke 1, 42. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus
ventris tui.

The meaning of the line: "Tu quae portabis p. h. et an gen." seems destined to remain obscure. In conjunction with this line it is interesting to read the third stanza of the sequence De Beata Maria Virgine as given in the Anal. Hymn., 337.

1. Ave, Maria,
gratia plena.

2. Dominus tecum
virgo serena.

3. Benedicta tu
in mulieribus,
Quae peperisti
pacem hominibus
et angelis gloriam.

The possible relation of the three last lines of the above sequence with the original obscure verse of the Ludus has been suggested to Karl Young. For other possible interpretations see his: The Drama of the Medieval Church, 2, 180 note.

My soul doth magnify the lord, etc.

Then Elizabeth retires for she will take no more part in the presentation.

The Mary goes to her couch, having already conceived of the Holy Ghost and gives birth to her son. Near her is seated Joseph in honorable attire and with a long beard.³⁰ When the child is born a star appears and the choir begins this antiphon:

Today is born the Christ.³¹

When the antiphon is finished, the star appears, and when it is plainly in sight, three kings approach coming from different

²⁹Luke 11, 46 et seq. Magnificat anima mea Dominum . . . The delightful hymn of joy and praise and thanksgiving composed by the Blessed Virgin Mary, and sung at the end of Vespers.

³⁰The belief that Joseph was much older than Mary is an ancient one coming principally from the apocryphal gospels. The Evangelium Infantiae nostri Heri Jesu Christi from the Abbey of St. Wolfgang in the Salzkammergut has the following in chapter 2. "Inter juvenes Joseph viduus forte adiit, qui lignarius erat, et senex inopsque videbatur." This Evangelium Infantiae has no discoverable origin and seems to be a recast of the Protoevangelium Jacobi. For the text in full, Latin and English, see The Childhood of Christ. Translated from the Latin by Henry Copley Greene. Burns and Oates, London, 1904, 38.

³¹Hodie Salvator apparuit: hodie in terra canunt angeli, laetantur archangeli. Hodie exultent justi, dicentes: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia! Du Ménil states that this antiphon is still sung in some places on Christmas Day during the procession. Op. cit., 197.

parts of the world wondering at the appearance of such a star;
 32
 the first king says:

18. I am uncertain which way to turn, suffering the loss of my powers of reason when I see this star which brings a sure indication, with the novelty of its appearance, of a new message! Well do I know the courses of the stars and their nature, and I know also to investigate their number. But when I observe this one I am struck with surprise because it has not appeared among some of the older ones. When the moon is eclipsed, when the Sun is darkened, what effect does Stilbone,³³ the companion of Venus have, in which conjunction you, Mars, are said to be especially harmful: all this the teaching of the ancients has taught me, but the brightness of this star leaves me speechless. What it may portend, I know not. Examining it more closely I can only hazard the thought that somewhere has been born a son whom the world will obey, whom it will fear greatly.

The first king says this, looking all the time at the star
 34
 and discoursing upon it. The second says:

19. A sweet joy overflows my inmost heart; behold no slight aid has been given to me on my journey. In that precisely which kept me perplexed, as it appeared incomprehensible to me, I have found a companion, a

³²This entire speech of the first king is in 32 trochaic dimeter catalectic verses, with the even verses riming. Like those following of his two companions, it is striking for its wordiness and pedantry.

³³Stilbone = Mercury

³⁴This entire speech is in 34 trochaic dimeter catalectic verses, the even verses riming.

partner of the preoccupation of my mind. When I, with attentive mind, contemplate the planets my reason understands the force of each one, of Mars and Venus, of the Sun and Mercury, of kindly Jupiter and aged Saturn. I know the power of each one in every position. But in this star which you observe³⁵ and which you point out with your finger, while I recognise its nature I am doubtful as to the reason of its existence. But so that we may together discover what it means, listen to what I think of it: the splendour which you see which illuminates so wide a space and renders pale the other stars, announces the birth of a king, than whom a greater shall not come on earth, whose very wish the whole earth will most willingly obey.

36

The third king pointing to the star, discourses and says:

20. Of every problem he (my teacher) ever knew to unravel the knot, from whom I learned that, when the ray of a new comet appears, the other planets are not seen,³⁷ and the destinies of some prince are made manifest. What a star is, I well know, or what is a

³⁵Here it is evident that the second king is answering the statement of the first one.

³⁶This entire speech is in 32 trochaic dimeter catalectic verses, with the even verses brachycatalectic and riming in sets of 4.

³⁷The text in Schmeller is:

Questionum noverat
 enodare rete
 ille, per quem habeo,
 quod, quando cometę
 se producit radius
 tunc 'latent' planetę, . . .

In the last verse above, Du Méril prefers "absunt" to "latent" Op. cit., 199 note. Karl Young adopts "hebent," op. cit., 2, 182 note.

planet, but this star is neither one nor the other.³⁸ However, as it is a star, let us rejoice in our hearts, and let our every thought rejoice, because it truly announces the coming of a new prince. See how greatly the light of the star is spreading over the sky. Of every other planet the splendor is fading because such is appropriate to him who is born, and the power of each star is lessened by this one. Therefore let us go forward all together with our gifts and wherever the star will lead, let us follow and thus when we shall see him whom we hope has been born, we may make to him our royal offerings.³⁹

Then the Kings go forward as far as the land of Herod seeking the Child and chanting:

40

Where is He who is born, etc.

³⁸The text in Schmeller is:

Quid sit stella novimus
et quid sit planeta;
horum hæc est neutrum;

"neutrum" is evidently in agreement with ("sidus"), "horum hæc (sidus) est neutrum." The meter here calls for three syllables for "neutrum" to give this hemistich the syllable which is lacking.

³⁹The text here is;

Ergo cum muneribus una procedamus
et quo stella duxerit gressus
dirigamus ut, quando viderimus
quem natum speramus, nostra ei
'munera' reges offeramus.

Schmeller is doubtful evidently about "munera." Du Méril. Op. cit., 199 note, suggests "munia" and states that St. Isidor uses "munia" in the sense of "munera."

⁴⁰Matt. 2, 2. Ubi est qui natus est rex Judaeorum? Vidimus enim stellam ejus in Oriente, et venimus adorare eum.

Messengers from Herod meet them and say:

21. Oh! you who wear the dress and signs of royalty tell us why you travel thus; or are you bearers of some secret⁴¹ news which you wish brought to the ears of our sovereign.⁴²

We are the officers and the deputies of Herod, to whom frequently come messengers from divers parts. No secret of the palace is hidden from us; we are well fitted then to be made acquainted with your business. . .

The kings answer:

22. We do not wish to conceal anything that is asked of us: the very star itself, which we see, discloses what we are looking for. We are seeking the king who has been born, of whose kingdom, the star tells us, there shall be no end.

The messengers make answer:

23. Joyfully shall your message come to Herod, gladly will he hear this news of a king; and so that from our own lips he may hear the happy news, follow slowly in our footsteps.

⁴¹Schmeller's text is:

vel si 'secretum' aliquid
reserandum noscitis

For "secretum," which breaks the meter badly Du Méril,
Op. cit., 200 note, proposes "latens," "clausum," "tectum."
Karl Young, op. cit., 183, has "notum."

⁴²Schmeller's text continues

quod ad aures 'regias'
'vos deferre' queritis.

Both Du Méril and Young reject this wording. Young,
following Meyer-Hilka op. cit., 183 note, has

Iuderoum quod ad aures
regis ferre queritis

Du Méril, op. cit., 200 note, has

(Judaeae) quod ad aures
regis ferre quaeritis

claiming that Schmeller's emendation of the two verses was made necessary by the original omission by a copyist of the word, "Judaeae."

After this the messengers hasten to Herod, saying:

24. Hear, King Herod, a wondrous news, which forthwith three kings will report to you. They affirm that a king, greatly to be revered, has just been born, who, they do not hesitate to believe will conquer all the earth.

Herod, with great displeasure answers:

25. Why do you dare report such things to your king? Do not, I caution you, invent falsehoods. Am I not the powerful Herod who is able to subjugate all that this earth holds, the sky, the land, the sea?

After this Herod, greatly indignant, summons the Archisynagogus with all his Jews, and says:

26. Let Judea come here, fruitful in counsel, to discuss this question with us, and I caution you beforehand that death will be your fate if your reasoning be found deceitful.

Now the Archisynagogus comes in with his Jews with great haughtiness; Herod says to him:

27. To you, master, I address myself and let the others listen, our heart is troubled by the report of an unwelcome news. Three kings, not ignorant of the science of the stars, are coming here and they are hastening to the cradle of a mighty child.

The Archisynagogus answers with great wisdom and eloquence:

28. Let not your mind be troubled by doubts, my lord. Let the three kings come here who are seeking a child. You, with all diligence strive to gain them to you, and with feigned affection address them: "You are kings, I see, your dress doth show it, and pleasing to me is your coming amongst us, but what business may it be that brought you hither, declare to us clearly, for the king will

be prompt to aid you in all things."⁴³

44

The kings answer:

29. A new star is shining in the heavens, messenger of the birth of him whom the world will obey, who will be ruler of all, and without whose favor nothing can subsist. To him we hasten our steps bearing him these gifts.

Herod answers:

30. I do not wish to impede you on the journey you have undertaken; go then, and hasten to return to our presence, so that I may come bearing a suitable gift to him, to whom I doubt not, the world will be subject.

The kings retire slowly from Herod's presence, looking at the star and discoursing about it among themselves. In the meantime an Angel appears to the shepherds and says:

⁴³Schmeller's text is:

nam vobis ad omnia
rex erit expositus.

Du Méril, op. cit., 201 note, prefers
nam nobis ad omnia.

Du Méril introduces these "ameliorations" thanks to a copy of the text he had through the kindness of M. Ferdinand Wolf.

⁴⁴Here there seems to be quite a large section of the Ludus omitted -- we should expect to see here how Herod accepts the prophecies of scripture as related by the Archisynagogus, how the Jews retire from the presence of Herod; the entrance of the Magi into Jerusalem and their coming into the presence of Herod and their interview with him before he dismisses them. It is easy to accept the fact of a copyist's failing to notice his skipping over a few sections on taking up again his incompleted task of a previous day.

If nothing has been omitted it would seem then that the Magi enter the presence of Herod as he hears the deceitful counsel of the Archisynagogus, and that the words: "Reges estis, video etc.," were addressed by Herod to the Magi on perceiving their entrance.

31. A great joy, O shepherds, I announce to you. God has clothed himself in your flesh, which a woman has borne without the intervention of man; remaining a virgin she becomes a mother in bearing her son.

To the shepherds who have set out on their road, the devil appearing says:

32. Do not believe such tales, O simple-minded shepherds. They are vain stories, which truth cannot accept. That the Godhead should be hidden in a crib is something too clearly false to everyone's eyes.⁴⁵

To the shepherds, who are returning to their work, the Angel says:

33. Seek, Oh! Shepherds, the child in the crib, and venerate the mother and her child. Let no delay hold you back from this advice I give you, but let the devotion of your heart guide you there.

To the shepherds who again start out on the road, the devil whispers in their ears:

⁴⁵The introduction of the devil into this scene of the shepherds, in this Ludus Pastorum, within the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini, is something unique. The devil comes to try to turn away the shepherds with his false doctrine. He typifies the alternating solicitations of good and evil in the life of man. It is interesting to see the same device used in the next Ludus also of the Carmina Burana, the Ludus Paschalis sive de Passione Domini, where the devil in the form of a merchant besets the wayward Mary Magdalen and tries to foil the promptings of the good angel.

Maria veniat ad Mercatorem:

Dic tu nobis, mercator iuvenis
 hoc unguentum si tu vendideris,
 dic precium, pro quanto dederis.

Heu! quantus est noster dolor!

Mercator respondeat:

Hoc unguentum si multum cupitis,
 unum auri talentum dabitur;
 aliter nusquam portabitis.

Optimum est.

34. O! You simple people: see how great is the slyness of him who is plotting things against the truth! and who to conceal his lies the better, graces in meter all he tells you.⁴⁶

The shepherds wonder and say to one another:

35. Have you, my brother, heard what I have heard? A voice tells of a child having been born and then denies it. From that I conclude that all which I have heard is contrary to the truth.

The Angel speaks anew to the Shepherds:

36. Why do you not lend your ears to the truth I tell you? Who is this deceitful one who wishes to lead you astray? Let not the adversary lead you into error. Come, what I foretell, the crib will show to you.

The devil again speaks to the Shepherds as they are on their way.

37. O you all too simple-minded people and slow in understanding, the hay and the fodder that is not at all unpleasant to the oxen, the divinity lying in a manger eats. You must be altogether foolish, if you believe that such a thing is true.

Then the shepherds speak again to their companions:

⁴⁶The speech of the Angel was in rimed dactyls:

Pastores, querite
natum in presepio,
et votum solvite
Matri cum filio.

Nec mora veniat
isti consilio,
sed vos huc dirigat
mentis devotio.

- 74
38. Really,⁴⁷ brother, listen how repugnant. Now I hear some things, and then I hear the contrary; my simple mind, my inexperienced mind knows not which opinion may be the better.

Then many angels come together and together they sing:

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will.⁴⁸ Aeua! Aeua!

After this song has been heard, one of the shepherds says to his companions:

39. At the sound of this voice, a sigh springs from my heart: because of it within me there rings a most sweet joy. Let us go therefore all together to the crib and on bended knees let us adore the child.

Then the shepherds go to the crib singing the antiphon:

And it came to pass that with the angel a multitude of heavenly spirits⁴⁹

⁴⁷Schmeller's text is

audi, frater, verum
qualis repugnantia

Du Méril, op. cit., 203 note and Karl Young, op. cit.,
187 note, prefer

audi, frater, iterum
qualis repugnantia.
Inde quaedam audio
hinc horum contraria.

The rhythm calls for the extra syllable in the first verse, "iterum" for "verum."

⁴⁸Luke 2, 14. Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis!

⁴⁹Luke 2, 13. Facta est cum angelo multitudo militiae celestis. The singing by the shepherds as they walk over to Bethlehem of these words directly from the scriptural text seems to be original here and does not appear in any other of the "officii pastorum."

At the end of their song, they adore the child; then the
 shepherds return to their own work: the three kings meet them
 50
 on the way to say to them:

Tell us, O shepherds, what have you seen; and
 relate to us the birth of Christ.

The shepherds answer:

We have seen a child, wrapped in swaddling-
 clothes, and choirs of angels who were
 praising the saviour.⁵¹

Then the Kings go to the crib and in the first place they adore
 the Child, then they offer him their gifts, first gold, then
 incense, and lastly, myrrh. Then they advance a little and
 they lie down to sleep, and an angel appears to them in sleep
 and says:

52
 Do not return to Herod, etc.

As they are going back, but not to Herod, the messenger says:

40. Let the Jewish people hasten to hear Herod
 and to give him counsel on a problem that

⁵⁰Cf. the Easter sequence Quem queritis ... Dic nobis, Maria,
 quid vidiste in via.

The text here has:

Pastores, dicite, quidnam vidistis, et annunt. Xi. nat.

⁵¹The text is

Infantem vidimus pannis involutum et choro ang. lau. sal.

⁵²Matthew 2, 12. Et responso accepto in somnis ne redirent
 ad Herodem, per aliam viam reversi sunt in regionem suam.
 There are several variants of this verse which seems to be
 part of an ancient anthem used in the Office of the
 Epiphany.

is troubling me.⁵³

King Herod, troubled, does not know what to do, seeing he has been foiled by the three kings.

The Archisynagogus approaches with his followers, and Herod says to Him:

41. You, O Master, explain to me the sayings of your prophets, if they have prophecied anything concerning this Child, for when you will have explained all to me, I shall come to know the secrets of my own heart.

The Archisynagogus answers:

And thou, Bethlehem, the land of Judah. ⁵⁴

⁵³The text here is:

Postea, non revertentibus ad Herodem, sic dicat
Gens Iudæa properet,
ut heredem audiat
et præstet consilium
de re quæ me sauciat

This passage would be incomprehensible in the mouth of the angel whose only business is to announce the birth of the Child and to direct the Kings in their search. Having the words said by a messenger and for "heredem" substituting "Herodem" gives the passage meaning. Then the next stanza which in the text follows the one above without interruption

Rex Herodes anxius
ignorat quid faciat
cum a tribus regibus
se lusum inspiciat

might be a rubric, a simple stage direction. I have followed these ideas in giving the above translation.

⁵⁴Matthew 2, 6. nequaquam minima est in principibus Juda: ex te enim exiet dux, qui regat populum meum Israel. Cf., Michaeas 5, 2. Et tu, Bethlehem Ephrata, parvulus es in millibus Juda; ex te egredietur qui sit dominator in Israel, et egressus ejus ab initio, a diebus aeternitatis. See also John 7, 42. Nonne scriptura dicit: Quia ex semine David, et de Bethlehem castello, ubi erat David, venit Christus? Note here that the Archisynagogus uses not the text of the prophet Michaeas, but quotes the New Testament though he had been sent by Herod to consult the books of the Prophets.

Then Herod enraged, says to his soldiers:

42. Hasten, hasten, in an armed band; spare not any one male child, no matter of how tender an age. Let every mother weep with her bosom empty, so that I may be avenged for this new-born babe.

The soldiers set out and slay the children whose mothers mourn and lament in these words:

43. Alas! alas! alas!. Why does the fierce soul of Herod wage cruel war against the fruit of our womb? Alas! alas! alas! So tender an age, still feeding from our loving breasts, what crime can our babes have committed?

Alas! alas! alas! what unspeakable anguish while the cruel sword transfixes these innocent bodies! Alas! alas! alas! O tender offspring, because of you, your unhappy mother will descend into the tomb. Alas! alas! alas! Joy of my life, my son, now you will be my sorrow, and the gateway to my death.

Then Herod is eaten alive by worms, and toppling from his throne,

55 The hideously realistic manner in which the death of Herod is presented is based upon the account given by Josephus (see Antiquitates Iudaicae, 17, 6, 5, in Flavii Iosephi Iudaei Opera Omnia. Leipzig, 1850, 99-102.)

Bede's Martyrology served to keep the harrowing details before the minds of the medieval faithful.

Bethlehem Iudaeae natale sanctorum Innocentium, quos Herodes, cum Christi nativitatem cognovisset, tricesimo quinto anno regni sui interfici jussit, qui anno tricesimo sexto morbo intercutis aquae et scatentibus toto corpore vermibus, miserabiliter et digne mortuus (see Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Patrologia Latina. 94, 1144.) Peter Comestor goes into more grim detail:

Dehinc variis affligebatur languoribus. Nam febris non mediocris erat, prurigo intolerabilis in omni corporis superficie, assiduis vexabatur colli tormentis, pedes intercutaneo vitio tumuerant, putredo testiculorum vermes generebat, creber anhelitus et interrupta suspiria, quae ad vindictam Dei ab omnibus referebantur.

(Migne, op. cit., 198, 1546, chap. 16, Petri Comestoris Historia Scholastica in Evangelia.)

the demons carry off his dead body with great rejoicing, and his crown is put upon the head of his son, Archelaus.

56

During his reign an Angel appears, during the night, to Joseph, saying to him:

Take the child and his mother, and fly into Egypt.⁵⁷

Mary walks before the donkey and says:

44. To undergo every hardship, so as to ward off every danger from my son, I, his mother, am ready. As I am setting out, be my companion on the journey.⁵⁸

The King of Egypt with his court advances to the place prepared for him, and meantime the following is sung:

⁵⁶Text: "quo regnante," evidently meaning "Herode adhuc regnante."

⁵⁷Matthew 2, 13. Accipe puerum et matrem ejus, et fuge in Aegyptum.

⁵⁸Cf. The Ordo Rachelis of the XI century from the Cathedral of Freising, now in the Munich Staatsbibliothek, MS. lat. 6264, Lectionarium Frisingense, fol. 27 edited by Du Méril, op. cit., 173, has:

Omnia dura pati vitando pericula nati

Mater sum praesto: jam vadam; tu comes esto,

The two hexameters of Mary are the same in the two plays. The whole scene of the Flight into Egypt in the Benedictbeuren version is very fragmentary and less developed than in the Ordo Rachelis from Freising. There will be a short reprise of the Flight towards the end of the Ludus.

This scene is considered by some commentators as closing the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini. This point is treated more fully in the subsequent chapter.

59 The pagan song of worldly inspiration heard here so abruptly forms part of the collection of the Carmina Burana. See Schmeller's edition, 146, 53. It is here sung wholly or in part. The four stanzas and the refrain are as follows:

Estivali gaudio
tellus renovatur,
militando studio
Venus excitatur;
gaudet chorus iuvenum,
dum turba frequens avium
garritu modulatur.

Refl. Quanta sunt gaudia
amanti et amato
sine fellis macula
dilectę sociato!
Iam revernant omnia
nobis delectabilia,
hyems eradicatur.

Ornantur prata floribus
varii coloris,
quorum delectatio
causa fit amoris;
gaudet chorus iuvenum
dum turba frequens avium
garritu modulatur.

In calore vivido
nunc reformatur omnia
hiemali tędio
quę viluere languida;
tellus ferens gramina
decoratur floribus
et vestiuntur nemora
frondosis arboribus.

Annorum 'officiis'
hec arrident tempora,
geminatis 'sociis'
restaurantur fędera,
festa colit Veneris
puellaris curia;
propinant Amor teneris,
amaris 'miscens' dulcia.

There must have been two choirs alternating here, for this song Estivali gaudio, is sung by the suite of the king of Egypt, and the rubric for the following song, Ab estatis foribus, is "et tam iste comitatus quam comitatus regis hec sepius cantent."

46. From the portals of the summer love hails us.
Dotted over with flowers, the face of the
earth is changed. Flowers of love already
smile in the new season, the flower of a
tender age dies loveless. The first day of
spring is the beginning of all things. In
spring the earth celebrates its rebirth.
To Venus is sacred each day of this season:
let all the kingdom of Jupiter celebrate
these solemn feasts.⁶⁰

And both the Chorus and the escort of the king frequently sing
thus:

⁶⁰This is also a pagan song of the times, popular with the
"vagantes." It is found among the Amatoria Potatoria Lusoria
in Schmeller's edition of the Carmina Burana, 197, 123 and is
followed in 198, 123a, by a sort of German version. The Latin
version is:

Ab æstatis foribus
amor nos salutat.
Humus picta floribus
faciem conmutat.
Flores amoriferi
iam arrident tempori,
perit absque Venere
flos ætatis tenerę.
Omnium principium
dies est vernalis,
vere mundus celebrat
diem sui natalis.
Omnes huius temporis
dies festi Veneris.
Regna Jovis omnia
hec agant sollemnia.

The portion of the German version given is:

Diu werlt frout sih uber al
gegen der sumerzite,
aller slahte vogel schal
horet man nu wite,
dar zu blumen unde chle
hat diu heide vil als e,
grüne stat der schöne walt:
des suln wir nu wesen balt.

"The scholars were strong in faith," says Helen Waddell,
when they challenged Mary Virgin with that enchantment."
The Wandering Scholars. 203. Its incongruity in such a
theological work as the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini
is apparent.

47. To the fountain-head of philosophy run,
 ye thirsty, and drink of the savor of
 the triple spring,⁶¹ and the seven springs,⁶²
 all flowing from the same fountain-head,
 but not flowing by the same channel: that
 which Pythagoras, with subtle research
 devised for Physics, which Socrates and
 Plato established for Ethics, which Aristotle
 disposed for garrulous Logic. Sprung from
 the beginnings, these multiform seven found
 their materials in Athens, and inundated
 all Greece with these currents, which then,
 in affluent waves flowed over the west-land.⁶³
 These new joys are greatly to be revered;
 these outstanding feasts greatly celebrated.⁶⁴
 Sweet are the rivers of Babylon, tender are
 the seeds of perdition. A concupiscence of
 mixed tastes, produces the reposes of a
 worthless love. The idols which have so
 ensnared us give us the pleasure of our lust.
 Already apt for pleasure, our heart rejoices:
 in this way the mind is conquered by passion.
 With these affections the storm, set in motion,
 takes away from virtue its own strength.
 These are the bye-paths of happiness, the
 soft indulgences of pleasure; these the
 transactions full of wickedness and the evil
 desires of sinners.

And they frequently repeat:

⁶¹The trivium grammar, rhetoric, dialectic.

⁶²The seven liberal arts: the trivium plus the quadrivium, arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy.

⁶³In the stoic-Augustan system of philosophy three divisions are made, Physics, Ethics, and Logic.

⁶⁴Though no rubric or stage-direction is given here it seems sufficiently evident that this song beginning here "Hęc nova gaudia" is sung by a choir of the Jews.

The immortality of the gods. They are foolish.⁶⁵

At the moment when Mary and Joseph enter into Egypt with Jesus,⁶⁶
all the idols of the Egyptians fall to the ground. Their

⁶⁵These incomplete verses, evidently meant to be sung here in their entirety, seem to have been taken from an earlier play, the Ludus de Antichristo of the twelfth century from Tegernsee, Munich, Staatsbibliothek, MS. lat. 19411, Miscellanea Tegirinsensia saec. XII-XIII, 6-15. This Ludus begins:

Templum Domini et VII sedes regales primum
collocentur in hunc modum: Ad orientem templum
Domini; huic (sic) collocantur sedes Regis Hierosolimorum
et sedes Sinagogę. Ad occidentem sedes Imperatoris
Romanorum; huic collocantur sedes Regis Theotonicorum
et sedes Regis Francorum. Ad austrum sedes Regis
Grecorum. Ad meridiem sedes Regis Babilonię et
Gentilitatis. His ita ordinatis, primo procedat
Gentilitas cum Rege Babilonię cantans:

Deorum immortalitas
est omnibus colenda,
eorum et pluralitas
ubique metuanda.

Stulti sunt et vere fatui,
qui deum unum dicunt,
et antiquitatis ritui
proterve contradicunt.

Si enim unum credimus
qui pręsit universis
subiectum hunc concedimus
contrarie diversis.

These verses will be repeated further in the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini, 52, 55, 56, 57, 58.

⁶⁶This popular legend is doubtless based on the apocryphal gospel story:

Et in hoc templo in acropodiis vel auri vel argenti
stabant innumerabiles idolae, capita taurorum aut leones
erigentes et rubentes gemmas loco oculorum in marmore
faciei habentes. Et cum beata Maria cum filio apud altare
incessit, innuberabiles idolae trementes et titubantes ad
solum sese projecerunt in terribili tumultu; et prostratae
manebunt propter Puellum.

The Childhood of Christ. Translated from the Latin by Henry Copley Greene. Burns and Oates, London, 1904, 158. This

priests repeatedly replace them on their pedestals and offer them incense singing:

48. This is a beneficent divinity and at his altar all the people pour out their prayers. At his very wish, any hand or foot or eye which by chance has been afflicted, will be made whole again. Honor to Jupiter! honor to Neptune! Pallas, and Venus, Vesta and Juno, all are wonderful in their compassion. Mars, Apollo, Pluto, Phoebus aid us with their power in our misfortunes.⁶⁷

But so that this may not leave too pleasant an impression, a priest approaches the king and sings:

49. Hear, O King of the Egyptians, broken is the power of our idols, vain is the strength of the gods, miserably destroyed, their shrines have fallen down, their statues overthrown; the gods, put to flight in ignominious rout, desert us.

The king answers them with demonstrations of wonder:

50. I wish to know the cause of all this and how the gods can be placated. Let our wise men be summoned.

Then an attendant calls the wise men to the presence of the king and sings:

51. Royal commands summon you, be not tardy.

68

⁶⁶(continued) popular belief of the overthrow of the idols is perpetuated in the Litany of the Infant Jesus, in the petition: "Infant, overthrower of idols, have mercy on us." This belief, together with that of Joseph's having been an old man and the belief of Joachim and Ann as the parents of Mary seems to be all that popular belief has accepted from the Apocrypha.

⁶⁷This Greco-Romano collection of gods sounds very strange in Egypt.

⁶⁸Regia vos mandata vocant; non segniter ite.' This same verse is found in two earlier plays, the Officium Stellae in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, MS. 289, a text current in Sicily in the twelfth century, and in the Officium Stellae from Orleans, probably from the monastery of Fleury-sur-Loire. See Du Ménil, op. cit., 211 note.

Then the king says to his wise men.

I wish to know etc.
Give me your opinion.⁶⁹

The wise men answer:

52. It is our opinion that the gods should be held in honor; that the altars, temples, tripods and groves be renovated; that incense, storax, balsam, stacte be burned;⁷⁰ that human blood be poured out to the gods. In this way, by virtue of these offerings and these devout prayers, will the anger of the gods be appeased.

Then the king prepares himself to offer sacrifice and sings:

71

This is a beneficent divinity.

All the others answer:

72

Foolish are they.

Then when the idols have been placed again in their places, the king returns to his place: the idols crash down again to the ground. When this news is heard, again the wise men are summoned, whom the king thus addresses:

⁶⁹Vide supra 50, the two hexameters
Scire volo, quæ causa rei, vel qualiter ipsa
numina placentur. Sapientes ergo vocentur.

⁷⁰Storax is a resin derived from various trees of the genus *Styrax*. It was formerly used for incense. Stacte is one of the sweet spices pressed from myrrh in the preparation of incense.

⁷¹Vide supra 83, 48 note.
Hoc est numen salutare
cuius fundat ad altare
preces omnis populus (et seq.)

⁷²Vide supra 82, note 65.
Stulti sunt et vere fatui. . .

53. Tell us what this evil and sinister happening means to us and to Egypt?

To him the wise men make answer:

54. The king and the lord of kings is the god of the Hebrews, most mighty in his glory; he is the god of gods; before his presence the power of the idols like that of the dead crashes and falls.

Then the king sings:

55. Behold a new god, with his mother; let Egypt honor Him.

And all the idols are cast out. This ends the king of Egypt's appearance. Then rises up the king of Babylonia, whose followers constantly sing:

The immortality of the gods, etc.
They are foolish etc.

And this verse:

56. A jealous god must he be esteemed, who despising all others, wishes that he alone be honored. They are foolish.

In the conflict between Pagan, Synagogue and the Church, the

Pagan sings against them:

57. The immortal gods must be worshipped by
all, and their great number be feared.

73 This section of the Ludus, commencing here and finishing at 59 where the king of Babylon, enraged, cries out against the hypocrites, seems to be an interpolation as there seems to be no occasion for the Church to take part, in this stage of the play, in the dispute between the Synagogue and the pagan king of Babylon.

The Latin text here is:

In conflictu Gentilitatis, Synagoge et
Ecclesie Gentilitas contra eas cantet:

57. Deorum immortalitas
est omnibus colenda,
eorum et pluralitas
ubique metuenda.

Comitatus suus respondeat:

Stulti sunt et vere fatui,
qui deum unum dicunt,
et antiquitatis ritui
proterve contradicunt.

Gentilitas:

Si enim unum credimus,
qui preest universis,
subiectum hunc concedimus
contrarie diversis.

Comitatus R:

Stulti sunt.

Gentilitas:

Finxit invidia
hanc singularitatem,
ut homo coleret
unam divinitatem

Comitatus R:

Stulti sunt.

Their followers answer:

They are foolish and truly worthless who say one only god exists and wickedly contradict the belief of the ancients.

The Pagan:

Were we to believe in one alone who governs all things, we should then, on the contrary have to concede him subject to many.

Their followers answer:

They are foolish:

The Pagan:

58. It is jealousy which engenders this singularity, that a man should worship one god alone.

The followers answer:

They are foolish, etc.

The king of Babylon, enraged, cries out against the hypocrites:

59. I am compelled to put up with the tricks and the frauds of your deceit by which your wickedness is accustomed to deceive: it was thought to be truth in the guise of virtue, but falsehood appears in the very guise it assumes.

Then the king conquered, sings in the presence of Antichrist:

60. I promise you, o supreme emperor, that I shall serve you. I ask it in my right as a king.

The choir sings:

61. Ruler of all the earth, we confess you alone; you we shall always obey with all our heart.

62. Egypt⁷⁴ is the first and the most noble of all the kingdoms: it will crush the kingdom of the king of Jerusalem. Woe to you, Jerusalem! woe to you insensate tyrant! This very year the power of the gods⁷⁵ will overthrow you. The noble prince of Egypt shall return like a god, and the odious Herod, as a fool shall be cast off. Give heed, as we tell you, how wretched you will be, you will be devoured by worms,⁷⁶ these shall cause your death. Ungrateful and perfidious race, when you suffered hunger, to fill your belly, you made yourself subject to Egypt.⁷⁷

⁷⁴There is a complete change in the rhythm here. The "comitatus" has sung:

61. Omnium rectorem
 te solum profitemur
 tibi tota mente
 semper obsequemur

and now without any new stage direction the "comitatus" continues:

62. Egyptus caput omnium
 est et decus regnorum,
 calcabit hęc imperium
 regis Ierosolymorum
 Vę, tibi Ierosolyma,
 vę insano tiranno. . .

It seems fairly reasonable to assume that these last lines of the play were sung on the stage in chorus by all those who had taken part in the play and who bring it to a happy conclusion chanting imprecations against the Jews.

⁷⁵Schmeller noticed the difficulty in this line and has written it

(de)orum vos potentia
 subvertet in hoc anno.

The laudatory reference here again to the power of the gods is a contradiction to the whole theme of this last section.

Du Méril suggests "(Arm)orum" for "(de)orum". op. cit., 215.

⁷⁶Schmeller's text is:

roderis a vermibus
 per hos 'tibi' interitus
 Young suggests the emendation
 (tu) roderis a vermibus
 per hos interiturus

but notes that the "hos" in the MS is largely illegible.

Young, op. cit., 468 and note.

⁷⁷The text ends in the middle of the last line on fol. 106^v, the rest of the line being blank. At the top of fol. 107^R beings the Ludus Paschalis sive de Passione Domini.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The natural centre of a dramatic performance on Christmas Day was the "praesepe" at Bethlehem, and the action invariably chosen was the coming of the shepherds to adore the new-born Child. The only circumstantial account of their visit is given¹ by St. Luke in the second chapter:

Et peperit filium suum primogenitum, et pannis eum involvit, et reclinavit eum in praesepio, quia non erat eis locus in diversorio.

Et pastores erant in regione eadem vigilantes, et custodientes vigilias noctis super gregem suum. Et ecce angelus Domini stetit juxta illos, et timuerunt timore magno. Et dixit illis angelus: Nolite timere; ecce enim evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum, quod erit omni populo: quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator qui est Christus Dominus, in civitate David. Et hoc vobis signum: Inveniet infantem pannis involutum, et positum in praesepio. Et subito facta est cum angelo multitudo militiae caelestis laudantium Deum et dicentium: Gloria in altissimo Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Et factum est ut discesserunt ab eis angeli in coelum, pastores loquebantur ad invicem: Transeamus usque Bethlehem, et videamus hoc verbum quod factum est, quod Dominus ostendit nobis. Et venerunt festinantes, et invenerunt Mariam, et Joseph, et infantem positum in praesepio.

This passage has been elegantly translated into English by Ronald A. Knox. His delightful translation of the Vulgate Latin made at the request of the Archbishops and Bishops of

¹Luke 2. 7-20.

England and Wales follows:

She brought forth her son, her first-born, whom she wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

In the same country there were shepherds awake in the fields, keeping night-watches over their flocks. And all at once an angel of the Lord came and stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone about them, so that they were overcome with fear. But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid; behold the news I bring you is good news of a great rejoicing for the whole people. This day, in the city of David, a Saviour has been born for you, no other than the Lord Christ. This is the sign by which you are to know him; you will find a child still in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger. Then on a sudden, a multitude of the heavenly army appeared to them at the angel's side, giving praise to God and saying, Glory to God in high heaven, and peace on earth to men that are God's friends.

When the angels had left them and gone back into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Come, let us make our way to Bethlehem, and see for ourselves this happening which God has made known to us. And so they went with all haste, and found Mary and Joseph there, with the child lying in the manger.

The angelic joyfulness and all the simple serene beauty of this gospel narrative do not, however, offer all the details desired by a playwright. One might imagine that the scene on the hillside, except for the joyful voices of the angels and the unadorned statement that "the shepherds spoke to each other," and the scene beside the manger was a silent one, the simple-minded shepherds being completely overawed by what they saw before them. The required dialogue had to be devised or extended from the evangelist's simple narrative. There had to be an introduction; there had to be an exposition and in what better way could this be done than by relating the

scriptural prophecies foretelling the birth of the Savior and the confusion of the Jews and the refutation of their objections to belief in the virgin birth? The model for the dialogue had already been set by the Easter trope Quem quaeritis, the simplest version of which is found in a manuscript of the tenth century from the monastery of St. Gall, De Resurrectione Domini.

Interrogatio:

Quem queritis in sepulchro
Christicolę?

Responsio:

Iesum Nazarenum crucifixum, o
caelicolę.²

and more recently by the text of the eleventh century from Limoges:

Ad Dominicam Missam

Quem queritis in praesepe, pastores, dicite?
Salvatorem Christum Dominum
infantem pannis involutum, secundum
sermonem angelicum³

The dramatic trope of Christmas failed to achieve impersonation till it had been severed from the Introit of the Mass and given a place at the end of the office of Matins just before the Mass began. The dramatic performance which developed in this position is appropriately called the Officium Pastorum and this is undoubtedly the central point of interest in any drama of Christmas.

²St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS. 484.

³Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Lat. 887.

The Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini seems composed of the junction of several kinds of play which were acted all through the Christmas season, dramatizing the visit of the shepherds to the manger at Bethlehem, the Officium Pastorum; the coming of the Magi, the Officium Stellae; the slaughter of Innocents, the Ordo Rachaelis; the testimonies of the prophets, the Ordo Prophetarum, and the relation of the flight into Egypt and the death of Herod. All these dramatic types, though each betrays an individual development, had always shown a tendency to combine among themselves into larger units, and in this Ludus their sequence and transitions are agreeably smooth. But to have them all combine in one Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini as they do in codex 4660 to form a comprehensive play, uniting all the dramatic themes of Christmas, is definitely exceptional.

The opening part of the play, regarded as a prologue, gives the general theme of the Ordo Prophetarum. Isaias, Daniel, the Sibyl, Aaron, and Balaam are seated before the chair of Augustine on his right, on his left are the chief of the Archisynagogus and the Jews. Isaias and Daniel sing their familiar prophecies with solemn dignity; the Sibyl gazing at the star suspended above her sings her verses, "gesticulose," with considerable action. The chorale 'Iudicii Signum' is befittingly sung and Aaron is introduced bearing his flowering branch of almond and he gives testimony of the birth of Christ

from a virgin. With drawn sword an angel challenges Balaam who comes riding on an ass to curse the unbelievers. He sings his prophecy as in the Book of Numbers. The Archisynagogus becomes hilariously obstreperous, boisterous, cantankerous, striking his companions, shaking his head, stamping his feet, acting like a Jew generally, "imitando gestus Judaei in omnibus," and ridiculing the prophecies generally. In an animated debate in which he is completely and easily routed by Augustine, the Ordo Prophetarum comes to an end as the prophets leave the centre of the stage.

The Annunciation, presented with notable fidelity to the biblical narrative, abruptly introduces the central action of the Ludus, the nativity of Christ, and the action moves very rapidly. Elizabeth is presented for a short time: Mary goes to her couch, having already conceived of the Holy Spirit. Near her is seated Joseph, "in habitu honesto" and the Child is born as the star appears and the choir sings the antiphon, Hodie Christus natus est.

The Officium Stellae follows with the brilliantly elaborated entrance, from different points, of the three Kings or Magi each confessing his bewilderment about this new star in the heavens in four stanzas of trochaic dimeter rimed lines, the first King reciting 32 lines, the second one 34 lines and the third King reciting 32 lines. Herod takes counsel with the Archisynagogus and the Kings depart. The shepherds come to the

manger and adore the Child. On their returning to Bethlehem from the manger they meet the Kings and announce what they have seen. The Kings hasten to the "praesepe," adore the Child and make their offerings. And angel warns them in sleep not to return to Jerusalem and the scene is set for the Ordo Rachaelis; "Vox in Rama audita est, ploratus et ululatus multus; Rachael plorans filios suos, et noluit consolari, quia non sunt."⁴

Herod angrily orders his soldiers to set out and slay the children whose mothers cry out in lamentation. Herod's death as he topples, eaten by worms, from his throne and his dead body, carried off by the devils, "multus congaudentibus," arouses horror and fear among the faithful. Archelaus receives the crown and Joseph flees with the Child and his mother to Egypt.

One might question if the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini should not have ended here and believe that all that follows represents another drama distinct from this Ludus scenicus and possibly incomplete.

Schmeller, when he first made known the Carmina Burana to the world in 1847, published the whole Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini as one complete unit down to the overcoming of the king of Babylon and the final song of the chorus in 62 without any evidence that he doubted that the Ludus should

⁴Matthew 2. 18.

be treated as one unit. Du Mé⁵ril followed Schmeller's lead as did Froning.⁶ Hilka and Schumann have done the same.⁷

Karl Young holds the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini should stop with the Flight into Egypt.⁸ Manitius is of the same opinion. "All this third and last part of the drama," he writes, "can be separated from the Ludus de Nativitate because it has no connection with it. The kings of Egypt and of Babylon and Antichrist have nothing to do in the same text which is made up of the scene of the prophets as an introduction of small incidents taken from the childhood of Christ and of the scene of the Magi."

In this last section, too, there is a noticeable difference in the technique of construction. In the previous sections iambic lines and trochaic lines are the most prominent. Here in the third section we find a much greater mixture of rhythms used, several metrical hexameters being met with. There are, besides, obscurities of thought and meaning contrasting with the clarity and directness of the previous sections. But that this third part is to be completely separated from the others, and that it once enjoyed an individual complete

⁵E. P. Du Mé⁵ril. Origines latines du Théâtre moderne. Paris, 1897, 206-213.

⁶R. Froning. Das Drama des Mittelalters. Stuttgart, 1891. 896-901.

⁷Hilka and Schumann. Carmina Burana. Heidelberg, 1930, 228.

⁸Karl Young. The Drama of the Medieval Church. Oxford, 1933, 191.

existence can scarcely be sustained. It will be noticed that in what follows the departure of the Child and Mary and Joseph for Egypt, the scenes of the king of Egypt and of the king of Babylon, and of Antichrist, all depend upon the significant phrase: "In ingressu Mariae et Joseph cum Iesu omnia idola Egyptiorum corruant." This very evidently links this section to the preceding ones.

On the other hand the profane character of the songs in this third section, in which love and pleasure, spring and earthly joys are praised, and which may be taken to typify the "idola" of Egypt the land of the lotus and of Cosmos, is in absolute contradiction with the preceding songs and with words and phrases suitable for a Christian religious celebration. In this third section the expressions are from a pagan and idolatrous world and as such would seem to exclude this section and give it no place in a religious drama of the Nativity so full of biblical prophecies and passages from the New Testament.

Another reason for believing that this section does not belong to the Ludus Scenicus de Nativitate Domini but is something added on later, and not too cautiously, might be found in connection with the death of Herod. In the last verses of the play, just as the end is being reached, the choir sings to Herod the awful death that awaits him.

Intende, tibi canimus
 Quam vilis sis futurus;
 tu roderis a vermibus,
 post hos interriturus.

But in one of the most characteristic scenes of the earlier part of the Ludus Herod was already dead. After the slaughter of the Innocents in 43, and while the plaintive "Heu, heu, heu!" of the mothers dies away, "Herodes corrodatur a vermibus, et excedens de sede sua mortuus accipiat a diabolis." There is a parallel, too, in the two deaths of Herod inasmuch as each one serves to close a scene.

There remains the possibility that this last section, that following the flight into Egypt, and comprising the scenes in Egypt after the arrival of the Child and his mother and Joseph there -- the destruction of the idols, the appearance of the king of Babylon and Antichrist, the conflict between the Gentiles, the Synagogue and the Church, and finally the death of Herod, -- may have been due to the loving labors of some pious monk or even may be a rhetorical exercise from some classroom. Perhaps in this way, too, might be explained the references to the pagan philosophers Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, and to the seven liberal arts in 47, -- references scarcely to be understood by a Christmas-night assembly of the medieval faithful and best understood and appreciated by the schoolmen and scholars. The thought and language are definitely scholastic.

Withal the play is sufficiently orderly. The order of events does not always follow the scriptural story. The magi are approaching Jerusalem before the angels appear to the shepherds, and strangely the flight of the Child with Mary and Joseph into Egypt comes after the slaughter of the Innocents and after Herod has been devoured by worms and Archelaus is on the throne. Fine dramatic effects are secured by the changing variations of literary style in the mouths of the speakers and an agreeable contrast and lightness is given to the more ponderous and pedantic stanzas of the scene between Augustine and the Archisynagogus, and of the scene between the Magi and Herod and also of the extraordinarily learned language of the shepherds. The recurrence of the choirs, too, gives a welcome time of rest and refreshment from the more sombre aspects of the drama. The tone of the play is definitely literary and, in general, serious and grave and the Ludus is definitely a scholarly work, composed, if we judge by the variations in style of composition, most likely by various scholars and, possibly even, at different times. It undoubtedly formed one of the stock pieces of the "vagantes." That it formed, for a time, part of the Liturgy of Christmas is suggested by the opening rubric: 'Primo ponatur sedes Augustino in fronte ecclesiae.' Though this might be understood as indicating that the play was acted on the platform outside the main door of the church, it seems most likely that the "sedes" was placed inside,

possibly at the east end of the nave and facing the people.

The church chorus had to participate.

The play is full of pageantry and realism. The "dramatis personae," -- Augustine, the prophets and the Sibyl, the Archisynagogus and his Jews, Herod and his court, the Magi and their train, -- all give scope for brilliant pageantry and show, and all form a striking contrast to the meek poverty and humility of the Child and Mary and Joseph setting out with their little donkey for Egypt.

The realism in the play is ever present, at least up to the last section: the Sibyl comes forward "gesticulose," the Archisynagogus "valde obstrepet," pushing his companions, moving his head and his whole body, stamping with his foot and with his staff upon the ground imitates the "gestus Judaei in omnibus." He causes a great clamor and answers "nimio cachinno." Augustine answers his taunts "voce sobria et discreta." The Angels appear to Mary "operanti muliebriter," and she is to move about casually. Particularly realistic on the stage is Mary's giving birth to the Child and Herod's falling from his throne, dying eaten by worms. The representation of these must have taxed the ingenuity of the medieval director of drama unless it may be that the familiar traditional story rendered minute details unnecessary. The play in the conjunction of the various sections covers the whole scene of the Nativity and undoubtedly added vividness to the joy and happiness of the Christmas season of those fortunate enough to witness its production.

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5.

Maior mea laude,
dignior forma veri hominis.
Tamen sine fraude
gloriam cano sui nominis;
verbi dei gratia fit ratio,
non est adulatio;
hunc decet vere collaudatio.

6.

Huic ignoro parem
circiter per totam Carinthiam,
si perambularem
Saxones, Francos et Bawariam,
Suevos, Renum, 'fertilem' Alsa-
tiam.
'Ut' finem faciam,
non habet clerus talem 'quempiam'.

CCII.

(fol. 99.)

Ludus scenicus de nativitate Domini.

*Primo ponatur sedes Augustino in fronte ecclesie et Augustinus
habeat a dextera parte Isaiam et Danielelem et alios pro-
phetas, a sinistra autem Archisynagogum et suos Judeos.
Postea surgat Isaias cum prophetia sua sic:*

1. Ecce virgo pariet	de venturo gaudeat
sine viri semine,	Iudea numine,
per quod mundum abluet	et nunc ceca fugiat
a peccati crimine;	ab erroris lumine.

Postea:

Ecce virgo concipiet etc.

Iterum cantet:

Dabit illi dominus sedem David etc.

Postea Daniel procedat prophetiam suam exprimens:

2. O Iudea misera,	Iudea misera
tua cadet unctio,	sedens in tenebris.
cum rex regum veniet	repelle maculam-
ab excelso solio,	delicti funebris,
cum retento floridæ	et læto gaudio
castitatis lilio,	partus tam celebris
virgo regem pariet	erroris minime
felix puerperio.	cedas illecebris.

Postea cantet:

Aspicebam in visu noctis etc.

*Tertio loco Sibylla gesticulose procedat, quæ inspiciendo stellam
cum gestu mobili cantet:*

3. Hæc stellæ novitas
fert novum nuntium,
quod virgo nesciens
viri commercium
et virgo permanens
post puerperium
salutem populo
pariet filium.

E cælo labitur
veste sub altera
nova progenies
matris ad ubera,
beata faciens
illius viscera,
quæ nostra meruit
purgare scelera.

Intrare gremium
flos novus veniet,
cum virgo filium
intacta pariet,
qui hosti livido
minas excutiet,
et nova secula
rex novus faciet.

E cælo veniet
rex magni nominis,
coniungens fœdera
dei et hominis,
et sugens ubera
'intactæ virginis'
reatum diluens
mundani criminis.

Item cantet hos versus:

Iudicii signum tellus etc.

*Dein procedat Aaron quartus propheta portans virgam, quæ
sumpta super altare inter XII virgas aridas sola floruit. Illam
personam conducat chorus cum hoc R. Salve nobilis virga.*

Et dicat hanc prophetiam:

4. Ecce novo more frondes dat amygdala nostra
virgula; nux Christus, sed virgula virgo beata.

Et dicat:

5. Ut hæc floruit
omni carens nutrimento,
sic et virgo pariet
sine carnis detrimento.
Ut hic ramus viruit
non nature copia,

verum ut in virgine
figuret mysteria:
clausa erunt virginis
sic pudoris ostia,
quando virgo pariet
spiritali gratia.

Quinto loco procedat Balaam sedens in asina et cantans:

Vadam, vadam, ut maledicam populo huic.

Cui occurrat Angelus eraginato gladio dicens

Cave, cave, ne quicquam aliud quam tibi dixerō loquaris.
Et asinus cui insidet Balaam perterritus retrocedat. Postea recedat angelus et Balaam cantet hoc.

Orietur stella ex Jacob etc.

Archisynagogus cum suis Judæis valde obstrepet auditis prophetiis et dicat trudendo socium suum, morendo caput suum et totum corpus et percutiendo terram pede, baculo etiam imitando gestus Judæi in omnibus, et sociis suis indignando dicat:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6. Die mihi, quid prædicat | Illos reor audio |
| dealbatus paries, | in hæc verba fluere, |
| die mihi, quid asserat | quod sine commercio |
| veritatis caries, | virgo debet parere, |
| die mihi, quid fuerit | O quanta simplicitas |
| quod audiui pluries? | cogit hos desipere, |
| Vellem esset cognita | qui de bove prædicant |
| rerum mihi series. | camelum descendere! |

Auditis tumultu et errore Judæorum dicat Episcopus puerorum

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 7. Horum sermo vacuus | sed restat consulere |
| sensus peregrini, | mentem Augustini, |
| quos et furor agitat | per quem disputatio |
| et libertas vini; | concedatur fini. |

Statim prophetae radant ante Augustinum et dicant:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8. Multum nobis obviat | Cum de Christo loquimur, |
| lingua Judæorum, | rident, et suorum |
| quibus adhuc adiacet | argumenta proferunt |
| vetus fex errorum. | nobis animorum. |

Respondet Augustinus.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 9. Ad nos illa prodeant | ut et error claudicet |
| tenebris abscondita; | re ipsis exposita, |
| et se nobis offerat | et scripturæ pateat |
| gens errori dedita, | ipsis clausa semita. |

Veniat Archisynagogus cum magno murmure sui et suorum, quibus dicat Augustinus.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 10. Nunc aures aperi, | Rex regum veniet |
| Judæa misera! | veste sub altera, |

qui matris virginis
dum sugit ubera,

dei et hominis
coniunget fœdera.

Respondet Archisynagogus cum nimio cachinno:

11. O Augustine maxime
de profundo portans hæc inge-
dum futurum prædicas [nio.
id quod negat ratio!
Nam si virgo pariet
et sine commercio,
naturæ robur est
et rerum confusio.
Tu quid contra resonas,
labe tactus veteri,
qui non illud respicis,
quod est iustum fieri.
Nam si virgo pariet,
quod prophetant pueri,
natura de proprio
iure potest conqueri.
Quando virgo pariet,
'Xanthe', retro propera!
lupus agnum fugiet,
plana fient aspera.

Si moderna colligis,
et attendis vetera,
in adiecto ponitur
est virgo puerpera,
ut propheta garrulus
incessanter asserit.
Vel si virgo pariet,
vel iam forte peperit,
quæ non carnis copulam
ante partum senserit,
quod fantasma fuerit,
lex docet et aperit.
Quod de clausa virgine
sic procedat parvulus,
est erroris credere,
non doctrine cumulus.
Vel ergo respondeat
ad obiectum emulus,
vel erroris fugiat
et ruboris baiulus!

Voce sobria et discreta respondeat Augustinus

12. In eventu prospero
talis casus unici
argumenta claudicant
moresque sophistici,

docet enim ratio,
naturam non reici,
siquid præter solitum
semel vides obici.

'Archisynagogus' dicat:

Homo mortuus
in adiecto ponitur,
quod in Aristotele
pueris exprimitur;

sed hæc vestra regula
tunc repulsam patitur,
cum de matre virgine
sermo nobis oritur.

Augustinus dicat:

13. Ne phantasma dixeris,
quod virgo concipiet,
quod pudoris ostio
non aperto pariet.

De Judea multiplex
testis nobis veniet,
qui vobis contrarius,
et nobiscum faciet.

Ut specular solidum
solis intrat radius,
et sincere transitus
servit ei pervius.

sic in aulam virginis
summi patris filius
lapsum quidem faciet,
et tamen innoxius.

*Postea incipiat Augustinus cantare I et alaudus primum versum,
et secundum prophetæ:*

14. Regem regum intacte profudit thorus. Res miranda

Dicat Archisynagogus cum suis

Res. neganda.

Iterum Augustinus cum suis

Res miranda.

Iterum Archisynagogs cum suis

Res. neganda.

Hoc fiat pluries. Augustinus incipiat

15. Angelus consilii natus est de virgine
 sol de stella

Respondent prophetae :

Sol occasum nesciens, stella semper rutilans.
semper clara.

Dicat Augustinus:

Cedrus alta Libani conformatur ysopo
valle nostra.

Dicant prophetae.

Verbum ens altissimi corporali passum est
carne sumpta.

Postea dicat Augustinus

Isaias cecinit,	Nunquam tamen desiit
synagoga meminit.	esse ceca.

Respondeant prophetae:

Si non suis vatibus, sibyllinis versibus
credant vel gentilibus hec predicta.

Postea dicat Augustinus cum prophetis omnibus :

16. Infelix, propera,	Natum considera!
crede vel vetera,	Quem docet littera,
cur damnaberis	ipsum genuit
gens misera!	puerpera.

Postea Augustinus solus cantet.

17. Discant nunc Judei, quomodo de Christo consentientes nobiscum amplexari debent novi partus novum gaudium, novæ spem salutis ipsum expectantium. Nunc venturum credant et nasciturum expectent nobiscum dicentes: Rex novus erit salus mundo.

Inter cantandum omnia ista Archisynagogus obstrepet morendo corpus et caput et deridendo prædicta. Hoc completo detur locus prophetis, vel ut recedant vel sedeant in locis suis propter honorem Iudæ. Deinde Angelus appareat Mariæ operanti muliebriter et dicat.

Ave Maria, gratia plena! Dominus tecum!

Et iterum:

Ecce, concipies et paries etc.

Illa stupefacta dicat:

Quomodo fiet istud, quia virum non cognosco

Respondeat angelus:

Spiritus sanctus superveniet etc.

Ideoque quod nascetur etc.

Respondeat Maria:

Ecce, ancilla domini etc.

Dein Maria vadat casualiter, nihil cogitans de Elisabeth vetula Iohanne imprægnata, et salutet eam et dicat 'Elisabeth!'

Unde hoc mihi etc.

Et cantabit:

Ex quo facta est vox salutationis etc.

Eadem dicat:

Benedicta tu in mulieribus etc. Tu quæ portabis p. h. et an gen.

Respondeat Maria:

Magnificat anima mea Dominum etc.

Dein recedat Elisabeth, quia amplius non habebit locum hæc persona. Dein Maria vadat in lectum suum, quæ iam de spiritu sancto concepit, et pariat filium. Cui assideat Ioseph in habitu honesto et proluxa barba. Nato puero, appareat stella et incipiat chorus hanc antiphonam:

Hodie Christus natus est.

*Qua finita, stella appareat, qua visa tres reges a diversis
partibus mundi veniant et ammirantur de apparitione talis stelle,
quorum primus dicat:*

18. Per curarum distrahor
frequenter quadrivium,
rationis patiens
et mentis naufragium,
cum hanc stellam video
portantem indicium,
quod ipsius novitas
novum portet nuntium.
Cursus ego didici
et naturas siderum,
et ipsorum memini
perscrutari numerum:
sed cum hanc inspicio,
ego miror iterum,
quia non comparuit
apud quemquam veterum.

*Hoc dicat primus semper inspiciendo stellam et disputet de illa
Dicat secundus:*

19. Mea iam præcordia
dulce vestit gaudium,
mihi viæ factum est
non parvum compendium.
In eo quod ambigo
se monstrantem dubium
et curæ participem
iam inveni socium.
Quando mente vigili
planetas inspicio,
mea vim cuiuslibet
deprehendit ratio,
de Marte, de Venere,
de Sole, Mercurio,
de Jovis clementia,
de Saturni senio,
quæ sit vis cuiuslibet

Quando luna patitur,
et sol quando obscurabitur,
quem effectum habeat
Stilbon comes Veneris,
in quo gradu maxime,
Mars, nocivus diceris,
mihi fecit cognitum
lingua sectæ veteris;
sed clinguem efficit
hic me stellæ radius:
quid portendat, nescio.
Sed querens attentius
hoc unum coniicio,
quod est natus filius,
cui mundus obediit,
quem timebit amplius.

in quo domicilio.
Sed in hac quam aspicias
et quam monstras digito,
qualitate cognita
de effectu dubito.
Sed quid inde sentiam,
tu mecum accipito,
ut fruamur pariter
quæsitæ proposito.
Illud iubar quod inspicis
et in tantum radiat,
et planetas ceteros
in pallorem variat,
regem natum prædicat,
quo maior non veniat,
cuius cedens nutui
totus orbis serviat.

Dicat tertius monstrando et disputando de stella.

20. Questionum noverat
enodare rete
ille, per quem habeo,
quod, quando comete
se producit radius,
tunc 'latent' planetae,
et quorundam principum
se presentant mete.
Quid sit stella novimus
et quid sit planeta:
horum hæc est neutrum:
sed cum sit cometa,
inungamur gaudio,
sit mens nobis læta,
magni enim principis
verus est propheta.

Vide, stellæ claritas
quanta propagatur!
in planeta quolibet
splendor hebetatur:
quod ei qui natus est
satis adaptatur,
cuiusvis potentia
per hunc obscuratur
Ergo cum muneribus
una procedamus,
et quo stella duxerit
gressus dirigamus,
ut, quando viderimus
quem natum speramus,
nostra ei 'munera'
reges offeramus.

Modo procedant reges usque in terram Herodis quaerendo de puero et cantando:

Ubi est qui natus est etc.

Quibus occurrant nuntii Herodis dicentes.

21. Vos qui regum habitus
et insigne geritis,
nobis notum facite,
quare sic inceditis,
vel si 'secretum' aliquid
reserandum noscitis,
quod ad aures 'regias'
'vos deferre' queritis.

Nos Herodis vernule
sumus et vicarii,
ad quem sepe transvolant
ex diversis nuntii.
Nulla nobis clausa sunt
secreta palatii,
ergo scire possumus
vestri rem negotii.

Respondeant Reges.

22. Sepelire 'nolumus'
quod a nobis queritur.
Ipsam stella reserat
que a nobis cernitur.

Regem natum querimus,
de quo stella loquitur,
quod eius imperium
nullo fine clauditur.

Respondeant nuntii:

23. Felix istud veniet
Herodi preconium.

et libenter audiet
hoc de rege nuntium.

Ut hinc ergo primitus
per nos sumat gaudium.

vos nostrum sequimini
'paulatim' vestigium.

Postea nuntii festinent ad Herodem dicentes.

24. Rex Herodes, accipe
quiddam admirandum,
iam a tribus regibus
tibi reserandum.

Ipsi natum asserunt
regem venerandum,
cui esse non ambigunt
orbem subiugandum.

Respondet Herodes cum magna indignatione:

25. Cur audetis talia
regi presentare?
Nolite, vos consulo,
falsum fabricare.

Num Herodes ego sum
potens subiugare
quicquid mundus continet,
cælum, terram, mare?

Post hæc Herodes maxime indignatus vocari faciat archisynagogum cum Iudeis suis dicens:

26. Huc Iudæa veniat
fecunda consilio,
ut nobiscum 'disserat'
super hoc negotio,

et ego vos præcipiam
exponi supplicio,
si vos esse devios
conprobat ratio.

Modo veniat archisynagogus cum magna superbia et Iudeis suis cui dicat Herodes:

27. Te, magister, alloquor
et advertant alii:
nostra mordet viscera
duri fama nuntii.

Huc tres magi veniunt
non astrorum inscii,
qui ad ortum properant
præpotentis filii.

Respondeat Archisynagogus cum magna sapientia et eloquentia

28. Ne curarum, domine,
verseris in bivio!
Tres huc reges veniant,
querendo de filio,
quibus te concilies
diligenti studio,
et eis sic loquere
sub amoris pallio:

Reges estis, video,
quod prophetat habitus,
vester mihi gratus est
factus ad nos transitus.
Sed quid vos huc traxerit,
reserate penitus,
nam vobis ad omnia
rex erit expositus.

Respondeant reges:

29. Stella nova radiat
eius ortus nuntia,
cui mundus obediet,
et qui reget omnia,

et nil stare poterit,
absque huius gratia.
Nos ad illum tendimus
hec ferentes 'munera'.

Herodes respondeat.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 30. Ne sim vos impediens | ut et ego veniens |
| ad vię propositum, | manus feram debitum |
| ite, ad nos postea | ei, cui non ambigo |
| maturantes reditum, | mundum fore subditum. |

Ab Herode discedant tres magi paulatim inspicientes stellam et disputantes de illa, interim Angelus appareat pastoribus et dicat:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 31. Magnum vobis gaudium, | quem 'mulier' non peperit |
| pastores, annuntio; | caruali commercio, |
| Deus se circumdedit | immo virgo permanens |
| carnis vestre pallio, | mater est ex filio. |

Pastoribus euntibus dicat Diabolus

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 32. Tu ne credas talibus, | Quod sic in præsepio |
| pastorum simplicitas! | sit sepulta deitas, |
| Scias esse frivola, | nimis est ad oculum |
| que non probat veritas. | reserata falsitas. |

Iterum pastoribus ad negotium suum redeuntibus dicat angelus:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 33. Pastores, querite | Nec mora veniat |
| natum in præsepio. | isti consilio, |
| et votum solvite | sed vos huc dirigat |
| matri cum filio. | mentis devotio. |

Iterum pastoribus abeuntibus, dicat Diabolus ad aures eorum:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 34. Simplex cętus, aspice, | utque sua 'fallerent' |
| qualis astutia | nugis mendacia, |
| eius, qui sic fabricat | in 'rhythmis' conciliat |
| vero contraria. | que profert omnia. |

Mirantur pastores et unus dicat ad alterum:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 35. Nunquid frater colligit | verum in contrarium. |
| ea que audio? | Ab hoc suscipio, |
| Quędam vox insinuat | quod audita resident |
| de nato filio | iuncta mendacio. |

Dicat iterum Angelus ad pastores:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 36. Cur non aures vertitis | Ne vos error induat |
| ad hunc veri nuntium? | propter adversarium. |
| Quis est iste subdolos | Ite, nam quod prædico |
| vertens vos in devium? | monstrabit præsepium. |

Dicat iterum euntibus Diabolus:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 37. O gens simplex nimium | in præsepi comedit |
| et in sensu vulnerata! | deitas reclinata, |
| Quod fenum et pabulum. | debacharis nimium, |
| quæ bubus non ingrata. | cum putas ista rata. |

Iterum pastores ad socios suos:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 38. Audi, frater, verum, | meus simplex animus. |
| qualis repugnantia! | mea mens non sobria |
| Inde quædam audio, | ignorat quæ potior |
| hinc horum contraria; | sit horum sententia. |

Postea simul conveniant angeli et simul cantent:

Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis! æuia! æuia!

Qua voce audita dicat pastor ad socios suos:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 39. Ad hanc vocem animi | Procedamus igitur |
| produco suspirium, | simul ad præsepium. |
| ex hac intus habeo | et curvatis genibus |
| cytharizans gaudium. | adoremus filium. |

Deinde procedant pastores ad præsepe cantando hanc antiph.

Facta est cum angelo multitudo cælestis.

Quo cantato adorent puerum, deinde revertantur pastores ad officia sua, quibus occurrant tres magi dicentes:

Pastores, dicite, quidnam vidistis, et annunt. Xi. nat.

Respondeant pastores:

Infantem vidimus pannis involutum et choros ang. lau. sal.

Postea reges radant ad præsepe, et primo adorent puerum, et postea offerant ei munera sua: primo aurum, postea thus, tertio myrrham. Dein modicum procedant, et tunc dormiant, et angelus appareat eis in somniis dicens:

Nolite redire ad Herodem etc.

Postea non revertentibus ad Herodem sic dicat:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 40. Gens Iudæa properet, | Rex Herodes anxius |
| ut heredem audiat, | ignorat quid faciat, |
| et præstet consilium | cum a tribus regibus |
| de re quæ me sauciat. | se lusum inspicat. |

Veniat archisynagoga cum suis cui dicat Herodes:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 41. Tu, magister, aperi | si qua sunt de puero |
| prophetarum edita, | a prophetis tradita: |

nam a te fideliter
re mihi exposita

se monstrabunt proprii
cordis abscondita.

Resp. Archisynagogus :

Tu Bethlehem terra iuda etc.

Dein Herodes iratus dicat ad milites suos :

42. Ite, ite pariter
manu iuncta gladio,
etas adhuc tenera
nulli parcat filio,

immo mater quolibet
nudo flect gremio,
ut de nato puero
mihi detur ultio.

*Vadant milites et interficiant pueros quorum matres sic lugeant
et lamententur:*

43. Heu, heu, heu!
Mens Herodis effera
cur in nostra viscera
bella movet aspera?
Heu, heu, heu!
Que etas adhuc tenera
'matris' sugens ubera
perpetravit scelera?
Heu, heu, heu,
iste dolor anxius,

dum transegit impius
innocentes gladius!
Heu, heu, heu,
proles adhuc tenera!
per te mater misera
descendet ad infera.
Heu, heu,
mihi vitę gaudium,
fili, nunc supplicium,
mortis eris ostium!

Postea Herodes corrodatur a vermibus, et excedens de sede sua mortuus accipiat a diabolis multum congaudentibus, et Herodis corona imponatur Archelao filio suo. Quo regnante appareat in nocte angelus Joseph dicens:

Accipe matrem et filium, et vade in Egyptum.

Precedens Maria asinum dicat:

44. Omnia dura pati, vitando pericula nati
mater sum presto. Iam vadam. Tu comes esto!

*Rex Egypti cum comitatu suo in locum suum producat^{ur} cum
conductu;*

45. Estivali gaudio etc. [*Vide Num. 53.*]

46. Ab ætatis 'foribus'
amor nos salutat.
Humus picta floribus
faciem commutat.
Flores amoriferi

iam arri^{de}nt tempori.
perit absque Venere
flos etatis tene^{re}.
Omnium principium
dies est vernalis,

vere mundus celebrat
diem sui natalis
Omnes huius temporis
dies festi Veneris.

Regna Jovis omnia
hec agant sollemnia.

[cf. *infra* num. 123.]

Et tam iste comitatus quam comitatus regis hec sepius cantent.

47. Ad fontem philosophię
sitientes currite,
et saporis tripertiti
septem rivos bibite,
5 uno fonte procedentes
non eodem tramite,
quem Pythagoras rimatus
excitavit physię,
inde Socrates et Plato
10 honestarunt ethię,
Aristoteles loquaci
desponsavit logicę.
Ab his sectę multiformes
Athenis materiam
15 nactę hoc liquore totam
irrigarunt Gręciam,
qui redundans infinite
fluxit in Hesperiam.
Hęc nova gaudia
20 sunt veneranda,
festa pręsentia
magnificanda.
Dulcia flumina
sunt Babylonis,
25 mollia semina

perditionis.
Concupescentia
mixti saporis
ingerit somnia
30 lenis amoris.
Hęcine gaudia
cupiditatis
tribuunt idola
captivitatis.
35 Apti deliciis
caro letatur,
hac 'via' vitiiis
mens violatur.
Affectionibus
40 motus tumultus
tollit virtutibus
proprius cultus.
Ista sunt devia
felicetatis;
45 otia mollia
sunt voluptatis.
Ista negotia
plena malorum
et desideria
flagitiorum.

Et sepius repetant:

Deorum immortalitas. Stulti sunt. [*Vide infra* 57.]

*In ingressu Marię et Joseph cum Iesu omnia idola Egyptiorum
corruant. Ministri vero sepius ea restituant, et thura incendant
cantantes:*

48. Hoc est numen salutare,
cuius fundat ad altare
preces omnis populus.

Huius nutu refflorescit,
si quandoque conmarcescit,
manus, pes vel oculus.

Honor 'Iovi' cum Neptuno!
Pallas, Venus, Vesta, Juno
mirę sunt clementię.

Mars, Apollo, Pluto, Phębus
dant salutem lęsis rebus
insitę potentię.

Quod quia non proficit, minister præcedat regem et cantet

19. Audi, rex Egyptiorum, Iam delubra ceciderunt,
lapse virtus idolorum, simulacra corruerunt,
destituta vis deorum dum fugati fugierunt,
iacet cum miseria. heu, cum ignominia.

Quibus rex mirabili gestu respondeat:

50. Scire volo, quę causa rei, vel qualiter ipsa
numina placentur. Sapientes ergo vocentur.

Tunc armiger vocet sapientes ad præsentiam regis et cantet

51. Regia vos mandata vocant, non segniter ite.

Tunc dicat rex sapientibus.

Scire volo etc. Vos date consilium.

Sapientes respondeant.

52. Nostrum est consilium deos honorare,
aras, templa, tripodes, lucos innovare,
thus, storacem, balsamum, stacten concremare,
et humanum sanguinem superis libare.
Tali quippe modo virtute ministeriorum
et prece devota placabitur ira deorum.

Tunc rex præparet se ad immolandum et cantet

Hoc est numen salutare.

Comitatus respondeat

Stulti sunt.

*Tunc idolis restitutis rex ad locum suum redeat, et idola iterum
corruant, quo audito iterum vocentur sapientes, quibus rex dicat:*

53. Dicite, quid nobis et quid portendat Egypto
mira mali species prodigiosa quidem?

Cui sapientes:

54. Rex et regum dominus	cuius in præsentia
deus Hebręorum	velut mortuorum
prępotens in gloria	corruit et labitur
deus est deorum,	virtus idolorum.

Tunc rex cantet:

55. Ecce, novum cum matre deum veneretur Egyptus.

*Et omnia idola abiciantur. Hic est finis regis Egypti. Tunc as-
surget rex Babylonis. Istius comitatus sepius repetat:*

Deorum immortal. Stulti sunt.

Et hunc versum:

56. Ille iure cupidus ut solus colatur.
deus estimatur,
qui vult, spretis ceteris. Stulti sunt.

In conflictu Gentilitatis, Synagoge et Ecclesie Gentilitas contra eas cantet:

57. Deorum immortalitas eorum et pluralitas
est omnibus colenda, ubique metuenda.

Comitatus suus respondeat:

Stulti sunt et vere fatui,
qui deum unum dicunt,
et antiquitatis ritui
proterve contradicunt.

Gentilitas :

Si enim unum credimus, subiectum hunc concedimus
qui præsit universis, contrarie diversis.

Comitatus R:

Stulti sunt.

Gentilitas:

58. Finxit invidia
hanc singularitatem,

ut homo coleret
unam divinitatem.

Comitatus R:

Stulti sunt.

Item rex Babylonis contra hypocritas:

59. Fraudis versutias compellor experiri, per quas nequitia vestra solet mentiri.	Sub forma veritas virtutis putabatur. ostendit falsitas. quod forma mentiatur.
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Item devicto rege cantet in presentia Antichristi:

60. Tibi profiteor,
decus imperiale,
quod tibi serviam;
ius postulo regale.

Comitatus cantet:

61. Omnium rectorem
te solum profitemur.
tibi tota mente
semper obsequemur.
62. Egyptus caput omnium
est et decus regnorum.
calcabit hæc imperium
regis Ierosolymorum.
Væ tibi, Ierosolyma.
væ insano tyranno.

deorum vos potentia
subvertet in hoc anno;
Egypti princeps nobilis
ut deus reveretur,
Herodes sed odibilis
ut stultus reprobetur.
Intende, tibi canimus,

quam vilis sis futurus:
roderis a vermibus,
per hos tibi interitus,
Ingrata gens et perfida,
cum fame laborares,
Egypto eras subdita,
ut ventrem satiares.

CCIII.

(fol. 107.)

[Ludus paschalis sive de passione Domini.]

Primitus producat Pilatus et uxor sua cum militibus in locum suum. Deinde Herodes cum militibus suis; deinde Pontifices; tunc mercator et uxor sua, deinde Maria Magdalena.

Ingressus Pilatus.

Postea radat dominica persona sola ad litus maris vocare Petrum et Andream, et inreniat eos piscantes, et Dominus dicat ad eos:

Venite post me, faciam vos piscatores hominum.

Illi dicant:

Domine quid vis, hæc faciemus, et ad tuam voluntatem protinus adimplemus.

Postea radat dominica persona ad Zachaeum et obriet ei caecus.

Domine Iesu, fili David, miserere mei.

Iesus resp.:

Quid vis ut faciam tibi?

Caecus:

Domine, tantum ut videam.

Iesus dicat:

Respice, fides enim tua saluum te fecit.

His factis Iesus procedat ad Zachaeum et roget illum de arbore

Zachæe, festinans descende, quia hodie in domo tua oportet me manere.

Zachaeus dicat:

Domine, siquid aliquem defraudavi, reddo quadruplum.